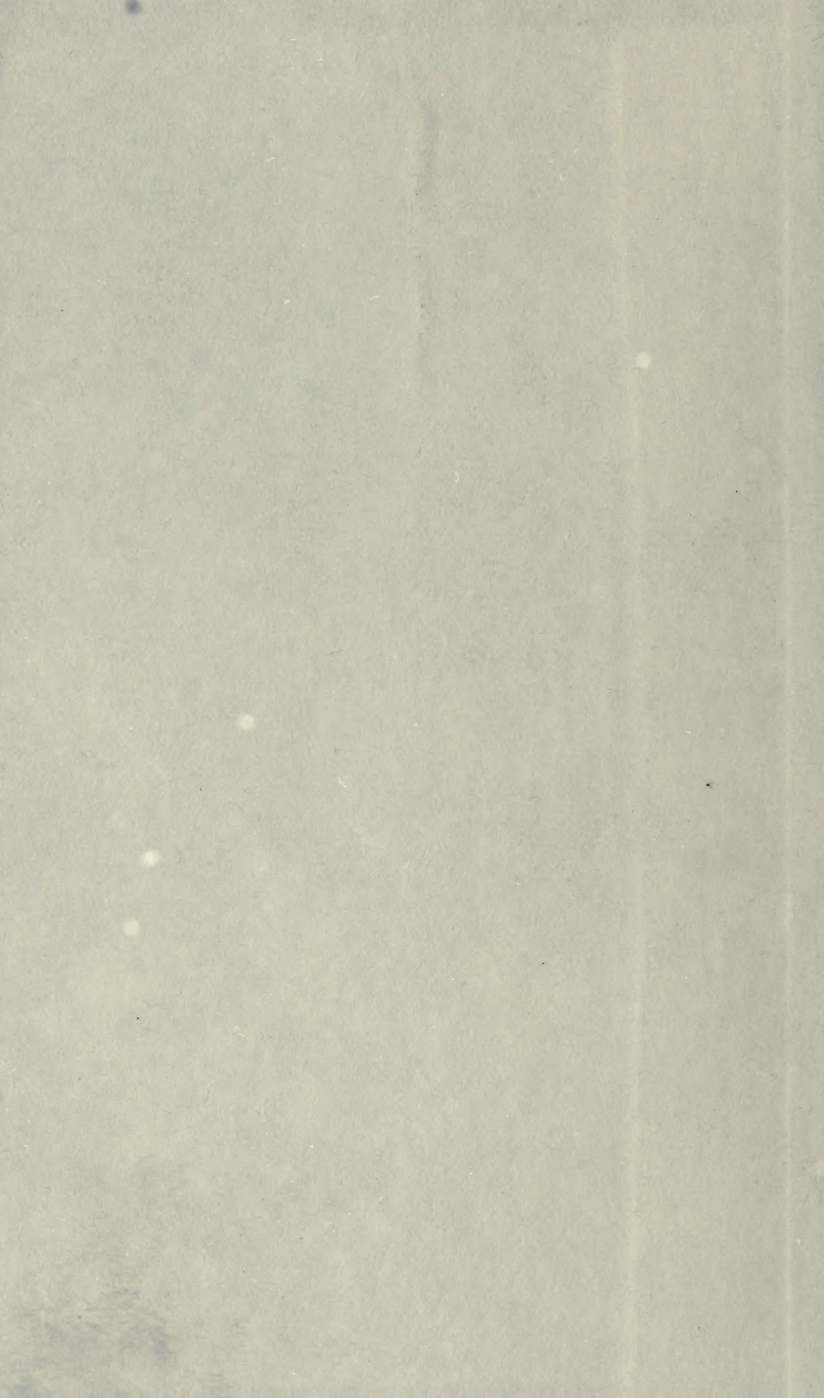




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AN INTRODUCTION TO
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THE WORK

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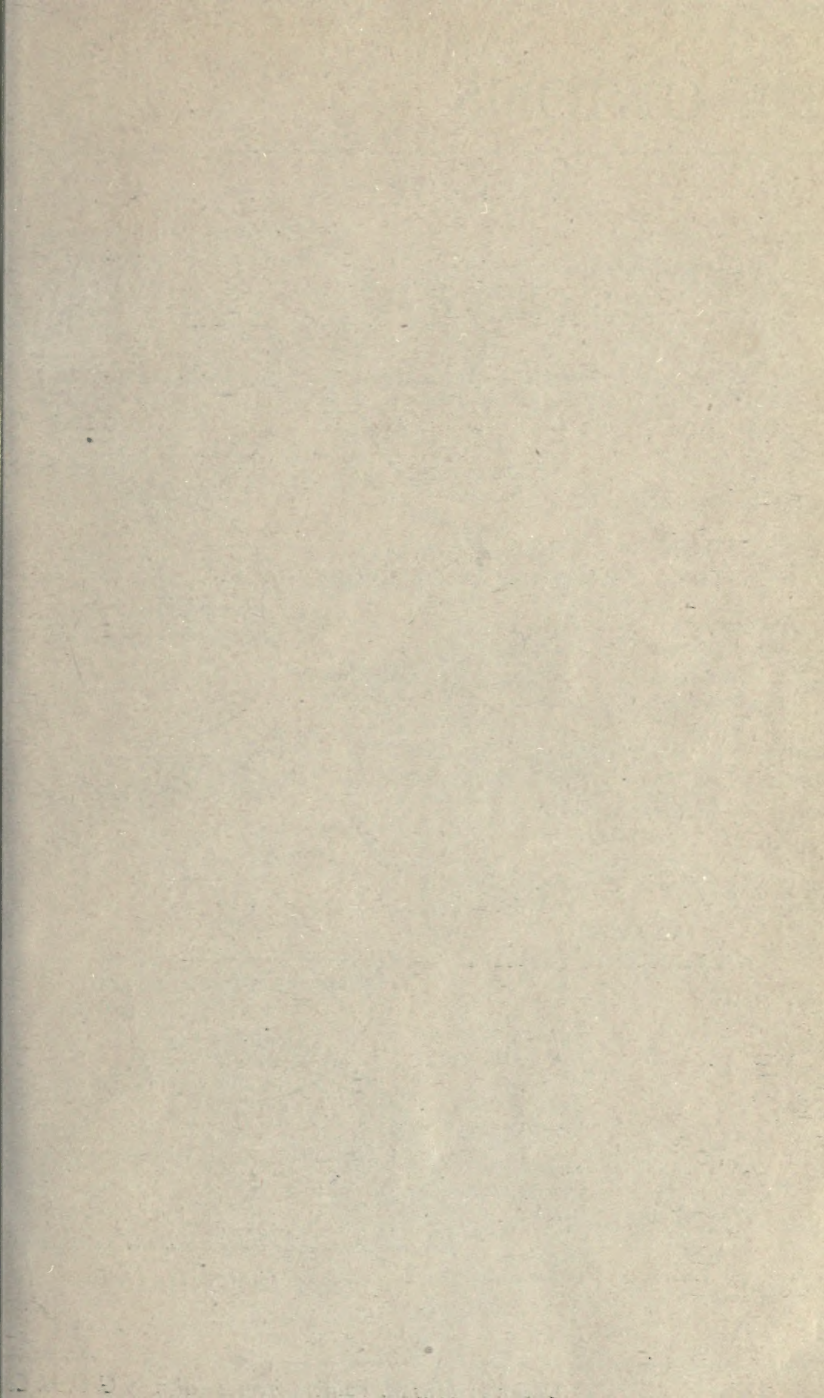
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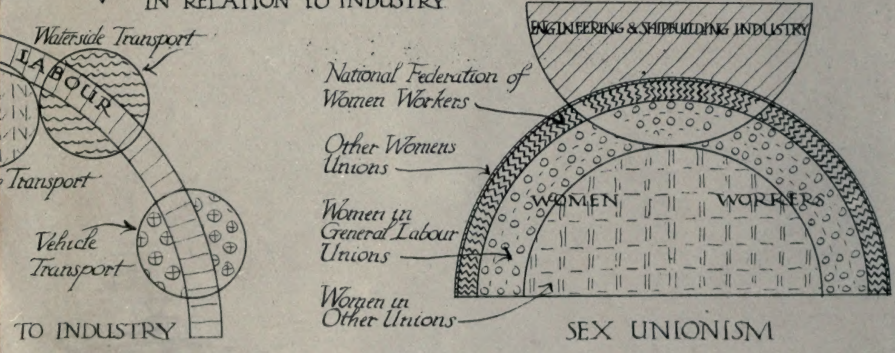
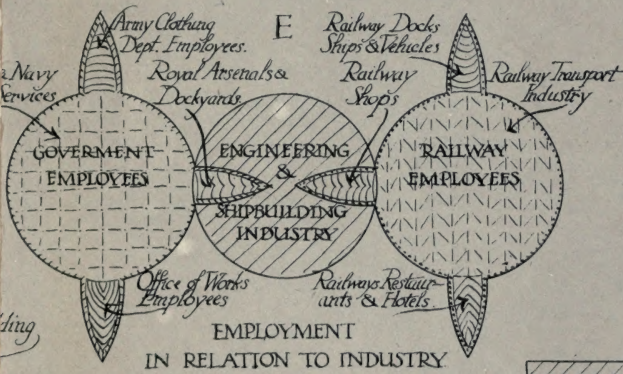
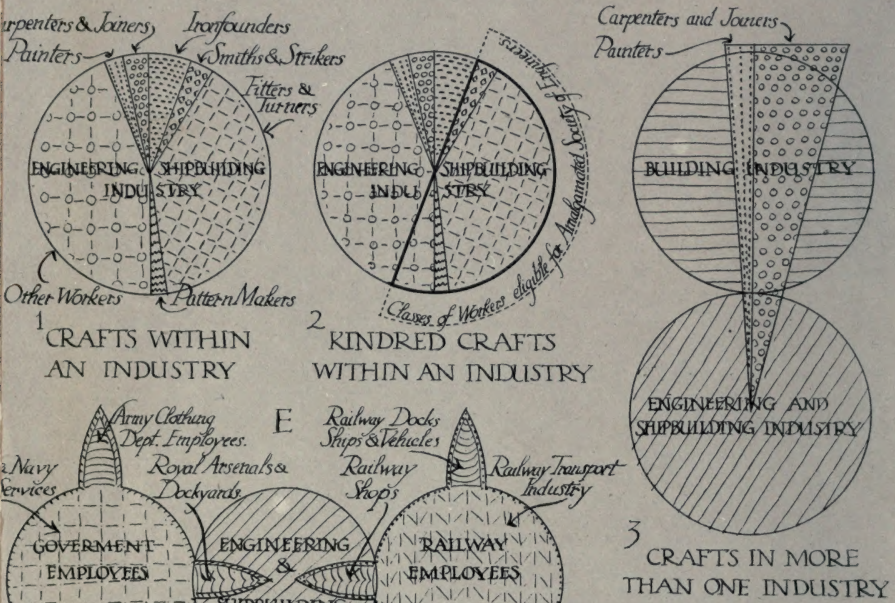
A large number of Trade Unions (with a membership of nearly two millions) are now affiliated to the Department, and are represented on the *Trade Union Survey*, which directs the Trade Union work of the Department. Trades Councils and other local Labour bodies are also affiliated, and a special committee of enquiry has just been set up, with the co-operation of the Labour Party and of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, to investigate the history, organisation, and future of these bodies.

The Department is very greatly in need of more money and of more helpers in order that its work may be expanded to meet the full requirements of the Labour Movement. Those interested in any way should write to the Acting Secretary, Fabian Research Department, 25 Tothill Street, London, S.W. 1, for fuller information.



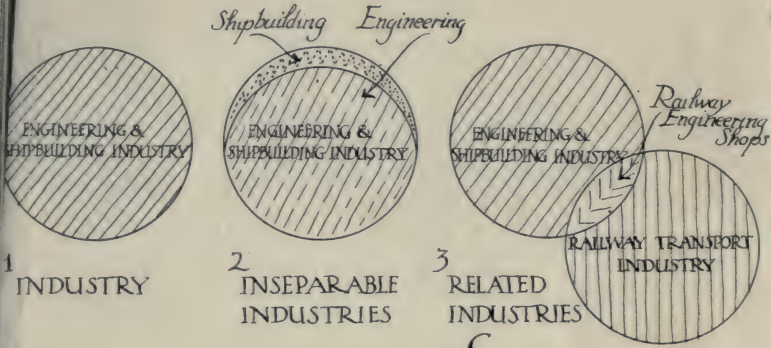
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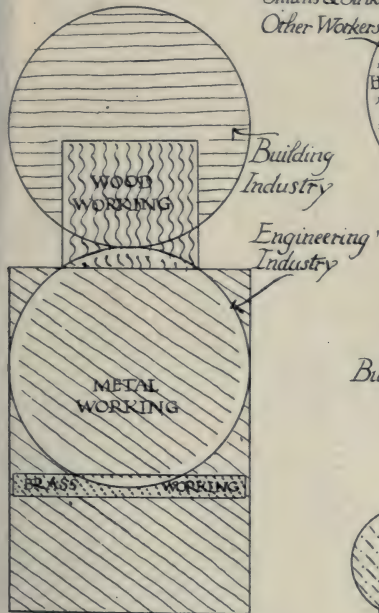


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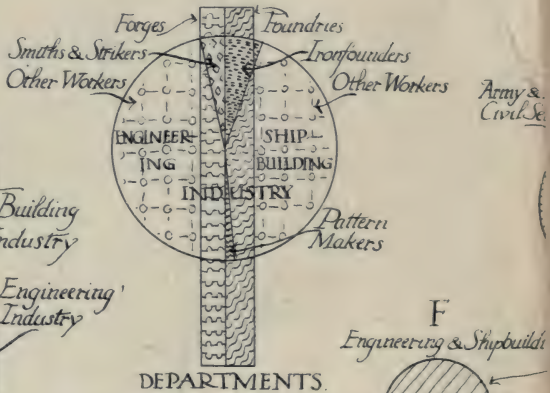
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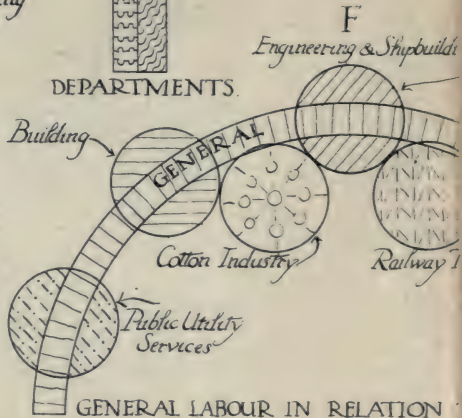
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DEPARTMENTS.



MATERIALS WORKED ON

GENERAL LABOUR IN RELATION

AN INTRODUCTION TO TRADE UNIONISM

BEING A SHORT STUDY OF THE PRESENT POSI-
TION OF TRADE UNIONISM IN GREAT BRITAIN
PREPARED FOR THE TRADE UNION SURVEY OF
THE FABIAN RESEARCH DEPARTMENT


By G. D. H. COLE

AUTHOR OF 'THE WORLD OF LABOUR,' 'LABOUR IN WAR-TIME,' 'SELF-
GOVERNMENT IN INDUSTRY,' 'TRADE UNIONISM ON THE RAILWAYS,' ETC.,
AND HONORARY SECRETARY OF THE FABIAN RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

TRADE UNION SERIES

No. 4

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THE writing of this book was undertaken at the suggestion of the Trade Union Survey of the Fabian Research Department, on which many of the principal national Trade Union bodies are represented. I have to thank many Trade Union friends and others for valuable help in its preparation; but at the same time I wish to make it clear that I am solely responsible for the opinions expressed. I may add that it could never have been written without the valuable collection of Trade Union materials which the Research Department has gathered together, and that it is intended, in some measure, as a restatement for the present generation of the conclusions reached by Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb in their standard works on the *History of Trade Unionism* and *Industrial Democracy*—books upon which all subsequent studies of Trade Unionism are necessarily based.

G. D. H. COLE.

June 1918.



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PART I

THE STRUCTURE OF TRADE UNIONISM

SECTION I.—THE PRESENT STRENGTH OF TRADE UNIONISM

THIS book is not in any sense an attempt to provide a comprehensive account of the present structure and organisation of the Labour movement. It is merely a study of an introductory character, which aims at bringing out the general features of the Trade Union movement at the present day, introducing actual descriptions of particular societies only for the purpose of illustration of the main points involved. By itself, then, it will not serve to give the reader any comprehensive vision of the strength or inner working of the Trade Union movement, but it may be none the less useful to set out, as shortly as may be, the general principles of organisation which the Trade Union movement has adopted and the main difficulties and problems which are confronting it at the present time.

I shall begin with a survey of the numerical strength of the Trade Union movement, and for this purpose it may be useful to institute a comparison between the strength of Trade Unionism to-day and its strength at the time when the only elaborate survey of the movement which has yet been made was taken by Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb, in their *History of Trade Unionism and Industrial Democracy*, in the early 'nineties. During the quarter of a century which has elapsed since Mr. and Mrs. Webb's studies, the growth in Trade Union membership has been enormous. There have been temporary set-backs in periods of decline in trade, but these have been insignificant in comparison with the expansion which has taken place in more prosperous years. During the last ten years the total membership has doubled.

At the end of 1892 the population of the United Kingdom was about forty millions, and the total membership included in Trade Unions a little over a million and a half, of whom all but a hundred thousand were men. The Trade Unions thus included about 4 per cent of the total population and about 20 per cent of the male

manual workers. In the case of women the percentage was hardly more than 3 per cent. At the end of 1915 the population was over forty-six millions, and the officially recorded Trade Union membership had reached 4,126,793, of whom over 400,000 were women. The Trade Unions thus already included 9 per cent of the total population, 45 per cent at least of the male manual workers, and perhaps 10 per cent of the women workers. Since then the progress has continued, and the aggregate membership of Trade Unions to-day is probably about five millions.

These figures, however, startling as they are in some ways, convey a quite inadequate idea of the real strength of the Trade Union movement. It remains true to-day, as in 1892, that Trade Union membership is specially concentrated in certain districts and in certain industries. It is exceptionally strong in Lancashire, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, on the north-east coast, in the industrial belt of Scotland, in South Wales, in the south-west Midlands, in London, and in certain other districts, while there are large rural areas in which the number of Trade Unionists is exceedingly small and some into which Trade Unionism has still hardly penetrated; but although this concentration still remains, one of the most significant features in the recent growth of Trade Unionism is its steady penetration of the less industrial districts. Branches, particularly of the General Labour Unions, and Trades Councils and Local Labour Parties, are springing up even in the more remote areas, and although this growth does not materially alter the disparity between the rural areas and the thickly populated industrial centres, it is a highly significant development, which is likely to produce far-reaching industrial and political results.

Trade Union organisation is concentrated not only in particular districts, but also in particular industries, notably coal-mining, the textile industries, engineering and shipbuilding, and others. Since 1892 the remarkable growth of organisation in the railway service, among general labourers, shop-assistants, clerks, employees of public authorities, and women has added a considerably larger percentage to the membership of Trade Unions in these groups than in others. At the same time, organisation in coal-mining, textile, engineering, and shipbuilding industries, in which the Trade Union movement has long been most strongly established, has grown so greatly that the numerical predominance of these groups is hardly shaken, and they still include, as in 1892, numerically one-half of the Trade Union world. The Table given in the first Appendix to this volume will give in figures the fullest corroboration of this concentration of the Trade Union movement in particular industries.

Among the large industries the least strong organisation in 1915, as in 1892, was that of the agricultural labourers, who in 1915 still mustered only an aggregate membership of about 13,000. This figure, however, is to some extent misleading, since the Scottish

Farm Servants' Union already constituted at that date an effective combination, with power to enforce district rates and conditions for a great part of Scotland, while the National Agricultural Labourers and Rural Workers' Union was not only exceptionally strong in Norfolk and the eastern counties, but was already spreading at an increasing pace over the rest of England. Since 1915 this process of organisation has gone ahead with increasing rapidity, and the passing of the Corn Production Act in 1917, with its accompanying provision for Agricultural Trade Boards, is at last bringing the agricultural labourers all over the country within the range of effective Trade Union organisation.

A further significant development of Trade Unionism during recent years is its considerable extension from the manual workers to other classes of workers, such as the supervisory grades on the railways and in the Post Office, and to some extent in private industry, clerks and many groups of professional workers who are in low-paid occupations, notably teachers, nurses, and others. Even the doctors have registered some of their professional associations under the Trade Union Act, and, as we shall see, flourishing combinations have arisen among such groups as the draughtsmen and chemists. In short, Trade Union organisation has, during the last quarter of a century, greatly extended its scope and power, both absolutely and relatively.

It will be well now to glance briefly at the strength and organisation of a few of the principal industries in order that we may get a better estimate of what these figures mean.

The most strongly organised industry in the country is coal-mining. Here the Miners' Federation of Great Britain holds a predominant position, including 800,000 out of a total of 1,095,000 persons employed in coal-mines. The Miners' Federation is a national federation, consisting of a number of district organisations in England, Wales, and Scotland. It is mainly strong among underground workers, but also includes in most districts the unskilled workers at the pit top. The various types of craftsmen employed in the mining industry are in most cases eligible for membership in the Miners' Federation, but the majority of them still preserve their separate Craft Unions of deputies, enginemen, mechanics, and in some cases cokemen, while a fair part are organised in unions of craftsmen which draw their membership not only from the mines, but also from other industries, *e.g.* the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, the National Union of Enginemen, the Electrical Trades Union, etc. Two at least of the mining Craft Unions have recently become affiliated to the M.F.G.B., but a number of these joined together in 1917 in a National Council of Colliery Workers other than Miners, which aims at upholding the right of the smaller crafts to separate representation apart from the M.F.G.B. The relations between the M.F.G.B. and the Craft Associations vary widely from district to district. In some cases, as in Durham,

Northumberland, and North Staffordshire, they are federated, and act jointly on the majority of questions. In other districts, where the Miners' Association has adopted an "industrial" policy and aims at including all workers employed in or about the mines, its relations with the local Craft Associations are far from cordial. The Craft Associations confined to workers employed in the mining industry have together a membership of something like 55,000, of which rather less than 30,000 are included in the National Council of Societies representing Colliery Workers other than Miners. This Council, however, includes also a number of General Labour Unions and other societies whose membership is not confined to the mining industry, and claims a gross membership of 90,000.

The railway service must now be regarded as one of the best-organised industries, having reached that position largely as a result, first, of two national movements, secondly, of a strike, and thirdly, of the amalgamation of three railway unions into the National Union of Railwaymen. There are now only three unions of any importance on the railways, apart from the railway engineering, carriage, and wagon shops: the N.U.R., which takes all workers employed on railways, the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, which includes about one-half of the workers in the grades of drivers, firemen, and cleaners, the other half being in the N.U.R.; and the Railway Clerks' Association, which now includes a considerable majority of the employees in the railway clerical departments and a goodly number of station-masters and other supervisory workers. Attempts at the amalgamation of these unions have so far failed, and the relations between the N.U.R. and the "Associated Society" are distinctly bad. The N.U.R. and the R.C.A., on the other hand, usually work amicably together. The great outstanding problem on the railways is that of the railway shopmen; for the railway engineering and other shops employ large numbers of workmen, who are organised in the various Craft Unions of metal and wood workers. These have been so far federated in the Railway Shops' Organisation Committee of Craft Unions, but this is now showing signs of breaking down, and has now been transferred to the Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades Federation, in which it will lose some of its importance by the secession from the Federation of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers—by far the largest of the Craft Unions that have members in railway shops. Repeated attempts have been made to secure an adjustment of the differences between the N.U.R. and the Craft Unions by some scheme of mutual delimitation of membership. These, however, have so far secured no result, and the present position is one of considerable strain on both sides, which the attempts of the Trades Union Congress to secure an adjustment have so far done little to relieve. The three railway Unions and the thirty or forty Craft Unions among them include at least 513,000 out of a total 610,000 of railway employees. The industry is thus well organised in a

numerical sense, although inter-union difficulties rob it of some of its strength.

The engineering and shipbuilding industries are remarkable for the extraordinary number of separate unions which they contain, as well as for the complexity of their own organisation. The shipbuilding section is exceedingly well organised from a numerical point of view, and the engineering section is, to say the least, well organised; but the advantages of a large numerical membership are largely offset, especially in the engineering industry, by inter-union difficulties. By far the largest Union is the A.S.E. with 275,000 members. Next in size in the engineering group stands the Tool-makers with well over 37,000 members, followed closely by the Friendly Society of Ironfounders with 35,000, and the Steam Engine-makers and the United Machine Workers, each with more than 20,000 members. In addition there are the Brass-workers with 25,000, the Electrical Trades Union with 23,000, and so on, down to societies with only a couple of dozen members. On the shipbuilding side the chief society is the United Society of Boiler-makers with about 80,000 members, followed by the Shipwrights' Association with well over 30,000. These two unions have now a very close working arrangement, which may easily lead to amalgamation. To this group may also be assigned the Associated Blacksmiths' Society with about 15,000, which is on the point of amalgamating with the Smiths and Strikers, who have at least 10,000.

A large proportion of the personnel of the engineering industry is organised in General Labour Unions, and this proportion has grown enormously during the war period, as a result of the peculiar conditions associated with the production of munitions of war. It is impossible, unfortunately, to give any figures of membership of General Labour Unions in this industry, but it is known that in 1915 the National Union of General Workers had between thirty and forty thousand members employed in the engineering group, out of a total membership of a hundred and fifty thousand, and it is certain that there must be well over three hundred thousand workers connected with munitions organised in General Labour Unions at the present time. This, however, cannot be taken as a permanent figure, since much of it is made up of emergency workers, who have come into the industry during the war, and will be unlikely in most cases to retain their connection with it when normal times return.

The position in one or two other industries can be very briefly summarised. In the building industry the proportion organised is comparatively low, by far the largest Union being the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters, Cabinet-makers, and Joiners, with over 100,000 members, many of whom are actually employed in the shipbuilding and other industries outside building. Each craft in the building industry has, as a rule, its own Union, and in most cases there are separate Unions for England and Scotland. Most

of these Unions are rather weak in membership, and many of them have had serious financial difficulties in recent years, owing to depression of trade resulting in heavy outgoings, and also in part to defective financial organisation. Builders' labourers, where they are organised, are for the most part in separate Unions of their own, but a certain proportion are included in General Labour Unions.

In the printing industry there exist a large number of Unions catering for distinct crafts. There is very little overlapping, since, where more than one Union exists in a craft, as in the case of the compositors, the Unions deal mainly with different localities, *e.g.* the Typographical Association, which has its main strength in the provinces, the London Society of Compositors, the Scottish Typographical Association, and the Dublin Typographical Society. There is practically no general labour in the printing industry, but the less skilled workers are organised mainly in the National Union of Printing and Paper Workers and the Operative Printers' Assistants' Society. The total proportion organised is comparatively high, though it does not reach anything like the proportion organised in coal-mining or even that of the railways.

The iron and steel industry has been largely reorganised from a Trade Union point of view during the last two or three years, and an effective organisation speaking for the greater part of the industry has been called into being. This is the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, which we shall deal with more fully at a later stage in speaking of the government of Trade Unions. It is in form a confederation of four societies, but it acts as a single body. Outside it are an independent and overlapping Scottish Society, the Amalgamated Steel and Iron Workers, two small societies catering for particular sections of tinplate workers, and the whole of the National Federation of Blast Furnacemen, which covers the blast furnacemen in England and Wales.

General Labour Unions have also a certain number of members in the industry, especially in the tinplate section, in which the Dockers' Union have a strongly organised membership. The mechanics are for the most part organised in the engineering Craft Unions. The improvement in numbers resulting from the recent confederation has been very marked, and the industry is rapidly raising itself to the level of the best-organised industries.

Other groups in which the proportion organised is high are the Post Office and Civil Service. These present very special conditions, and most of the associations exact only a low rate of contribution and do not pay benefits. The cotton group, with its close network of Craft Unions, covers practically the whole industry in Lancashire and Cheshire, but rather tends to ignore the outposts of the industry in Yorkshire and other districts. The dyeing Trade Unions are strongly organised, both in the cotton and in the woollen districts. The passenger vehicle group is strongly organised in many of the large towns, but weak in the smaller centres. The boot and shoe

industry is strong in Leicester, Northampton, and Kettering, and one or two other towns, but again weak in the outlying districts.

Trade Unionism is far weaker among dockers and vehicle workers in general, although the progress of the Transport Workers' Federation during the past year gives hope of a greatly improved organisation in these groups. In the woollen industry there is still considerable room for advance, although here again the growth during the war period has been very marked. Still weaker numerically is Trade Union organisation in such industries as distribution, despite the growth of the Shop Assistants' Union and the Amalgamated Union of Co-operative and Commercial Employees, and among clerks, where the National Union of Clerks and the other societies still cover only a tiny fraction of the enormous numbers employed. In all these industries organisation is to some extent retarded by difficulties between one Union and another. Into these difficulties we will not enter here, since they will be dealt with more fully in other sections of this book. It is, however, necessary to mention that often the actual numbers organised in a particular industry do not furnish an accurate account of the real state of Trade Union organisation, both because the Unions do not follow strictly industrial lines, and therefore figures based on the total membership of groups of Unions may often inflate one industry and deflate another, while the proportion in different industries organised in General Labour Unions is entirely variable, and, secondly, because there is always, and particularly in the weaker industries, a considerable in-and-out membership, which rushes into the Unions in times of difficulties and out of them as soon as things settle down again. This floating membership, however, can hardly be regarded as a real accession of strength in normal times.

SECTION 2.—THE UNIT OF ORGANISATION

It remains as difficult as it was in 1892 to state accurately how many separate Trade Unions exist, as any such enumeration depends upon the view taken of numerous bodies which describe themselves as federations or amalgamations. Roughly speaking, the total number of effective industrial organisations may be said to be somewhere about the same as it was a quarter of a century ago. If we take as the unit the body likely to register itself as a separate Trade Union, a high numerical total will be recorded; but in many cases bodies which have the constitution of separate Trade Unions are local in character, and are linked up in larger federations or amalgamations which have all the characteristics of effective industrial organisations. If we look purely to the number of separate Trade Unions, the movement towards amalgamation will seem to have done little more than keep pace with the foundation of new societies, and this is true even although the average size of

each Trade Union has increased about threefold from between one and two thousand to considerably over four thousand. But this is not a correct or adequate way of looking at the situation, since in fact the number of effective Trade Union combinations has considerably decreased. For instance, the Miners' Federation of Great Britain consists of at the least twenty-four distinct Trade Unions which are for the most part registered under the Trade Union Act. Nevertheless, on all questions of a national character, it does act as an industrial unit, and the Executive Committee of the Miners' Federation is generally recognised as a central governing body for the whole of the affiliated district associations of miners.

An even clearer case is to be found among the associations in the cotton industry. The Amalgamated Weavers' Association, the Amalgamated Association of Card and Blowing Room Operatives, and several similar amalgamations of textile workers, are all in the strict sense of the word federations, consisting of local Unions which preserve their separate existence and a considerable measure of autonomy. But in their industrial activities the whole of the local Unions which compose these amalgamations are subject in all general industrial questions to the policy dictated by the amalgamations, which constitute in effect single Craft Unions covering the whole of the Lancashire cotton area. The Spinners' Amalgamation is actually registered as a Trade Union, and the local associations within it appear in the lists of Trade Unions as branches and not as independent societies. But there is in fact no difference at all between a local branch of the Spinners' Amalgamation and a local society which is a constituent body in the Weavers' Amalgamation. To all intents and purposes the Lancashire Cotton Operatives are organised in a few large Trade Unions, centralised for general industrial purposes, while their branches or local societies preserve a considerable amount of autonomy, especially in dealing with friendly society and benefit questions.

A similar situation exists in the case of a good number of other national federations which consist of local bodies. The blast furnacemen are divided into a number of local Unions, which together compose a national federation. The sheet-metal workers, with a more complicated internal constitution, are again linked up in an effective national federation, called in this case an "amalgamation." The coopers preserve their local societies intact, but have a federation which serves as a rallying-point for all national questions. The list could be prolonged, but it already suffices to show that the numbers of Trade Unions which actually appear in the Government lists showing Trade Union membership and finance furnish no adequate record of the real number of bodies which actually operate as effective units in dealing with industrial matters. Indeed, if we are to regard the local Weavers' Societies or the local Sheet-metal Workers' Societies as separate Trade Unions, there is no adequate reason why we should not regard the innumerable

district committees of Trade Unions such as the Boilermakers, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, and many others, as separate Trade Unions. If this course were taken, the total number of Trade Unions would seem to be not one thousand, but at least several thousands.

The degree to which concentration of Trade Union membership has proceeded appears very clearly in the fact that a very small number of effective industrial combinations at the present time includes a very large proportion of the total membership of all Trade Unions. There are, for instance, eight effective industrial combinations¹ with no less than 100,000 members each and an aggregate membership of about two and a half millions, while three-quarters of the total membership of all Trade Unions will be found in not more than twenty-two organisations;² and certainly the hundred principal Unions of which the Board of Trade gives separate particulars in statistical tables include practically the whole effective bargaining membership of the Trade Union movement.

It is even truer to-day than it was in 1892 that there is no single principle clearly at work which dictates the basis on which Trade Union organisation is to proceed. The British Trade Union movement is distinguished from the Trade Union movement in most Continental countries by the fact that it has not been created by some central organisation or under the inspiration of some single purpose, but has grown up almost haphazard over a long period to meet special needs and to deal with immediate difficulties. The result of this is that in the main the organisation rests upon no common principle, and disputes between Unions, not merely on points of detail but on points affecting the vital principles of organisation, are very frequent. There are, in the main, two rival principles of organisation which are at present contending for supremacy in the Trade Union movement, Craft Unionism and Industrial Unionism. These two principles, however, seldom appear in a pure form, but are generally complicated by subordinate considerations, so that it is very difficult to get a clear view of

¹ Miners' Federation of Great Britain (800,000), National Union of Railwaymen (400,000), Amalgamated Society of Engineers (275,000), Workers' Union (270,000), National Union of General Workers (225,000), Amalgamated Weavers' Association (200,000), Amalgamated Society of Carpenters, Cabinet-makers and Joiners (107,000), and National Amalgamated Union of Labour (140,000).

² In addition to the above, these include the General Union of Textile Workers, Amalgamated Union of Co-operative and Commercial Employees, National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen, and Clerks, United Society of Boilermakers, Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, Postmen's Federation, Railway Clerks' Association, Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers' Union, National Federation of Women Workers, National Sailors and Firemen's Union, Amalgamated Association of Card, Blowing, and Ring Room Operatives, Amalgamated Association of Operative Cotton Spinners, National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives, National Union of Dock Labourers.

the precise question at issue in any actual case of inter-union dispute.

Up to 1889 the Trade Union movement, apart from one or two industries, consisted almost entirely of skilled workers, and was dominated at the Trades Union Congresses by the organisations representing skilled workers alone. In the late 'eighties the less skilled workers for the first time began to organise on a considerable scale. Finding in the field already strongly established organisations consisting of skilled workers alone, and faced by the vested interest and prejudice of these skilled organisations, they were compelled to form separate Unions of their own, apart from those which already existed. Thus there grew up the great General Labour Unions, including not merely the whole of the workers in certain industries which had not previously been organised, *e.g.* waterside workers, but also to an increasing extent the unskilled workers in those industries in which effective Craft Unions already existed. This movement did not affect certain industries, notably mining and the textile and printing industries, in which the division between the craftsman and the unskilled worker was not clear, and in which no body of unspecialised general labourers could be said to exist. But over the greater part of industry there appeared in the late 'eighties, and remains up to the present time, a wide cleavage in the methods of organisation, the skilled workers being organised in a series of Craft Unions of their own, while the unskilled are organised in a number of overlapping and rival General Labour Unions. It is interesting to notice that when the movement amongst the unskilled workers first gathered force in the late 'eighties the spokesmen of the skilled Trade Union organisations were perfectly confident that it would prove to be only a passing wave of revolt, and that once the momentary enthusiasm had passed, the General Labour Unions would collapse, because they had not to bind them together the close community of craft interests, high contributions, and high benefits upon which the skilled Unions rely. We know to-day that this diagnosis of the situation was incorrect, and that after a temporary set-back the movement of organisation amongst less skilled workers has persisted until to-day, the less skilled workers now constituting one of the largest sections in the Trade Union movement.¹ It is none the less important for this reason to point out that the belief which was widely prevalent among the craftsmen in the 'eighties and 'nineties that permanent organisation amongst unskilled workers was impossible, is principally responsible for the present situation in the Trade Union movement, which sharply divides the craftsman from the unskilled worker. The essential difference between Craft Unionism and the rival forms of organisation which are now threatening its supremacy, is that Craft Unionism aims at organising only the skilled workers, or at

¹ The General Labour Unions include about 750,000 out of about 5,000,000 organised workers.

least in organising skilled and unskilled in separate Unions ; whereas industrial unionism aims at including within the ranks of each Union the whole personnel of the industry with which it is concerned, including skilled and unskilled workers indifferently. Clearly the ease with which an industrial Union can come into being depends largely on the sharpness of the distinction between skilled and unskilled in the industry concerned. Thus in the mining and textile industries, as we have already noted, there is no very sharp distinction between the two classes of workers. In mining the boy who enters the pit has every chance of passing, before many years have gone by, into the ranks of the coal-getters, who form the skilled section of the coal-mining community. There is no sharp division or cleavage of interests between the main sections of the mining community. Promotion runs easily from one grade to another, and therefore it is the easier to realise a form of combination in which all these various sections are grouped together in a single industrial organisation.

This does not apply with equal force to the small specialised sections of craftsmen who are employed on and about the mines, and, as we have seen, separate organisations persist among mining enginemen, mining mechanics, deputies, and certain other sections of mine-workers ; but these form altogether only a comparatively small section of the mining community, and by reason of the absence, so far as the main groups of mine-workers are concerned, of any clear cleavage between skilled and unskilled, the mining community has been the first to realise something like an effective form of " industrial " organisation.

The railway service is to some extent in a similar position. If we leave out for the moment the special problem of the mechanics in the railway shops, there is only one section amongst the manual workers on the railways which has a very definite craftsmanship and a clear separate sectional interest. This section is, of course, the locomotive section, including drivers, firemen, and cleaners, among whom promotion proceeds from one grade to another apart from the general body of railway workers. Trade Unionism among railway employees has only become strong at a very recent date—since the all-grades movement of 1906. We now find that the great mass of the grades employed in railway work have combined into an effective industrial union, leaving outside only about half of the workers employed in the locomotive crafts. This half still continues to belong to a separate Craft Union of their own—the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen. In addition to the N.U.R. and the " Associated Society," there is, of course, a further separate organisation in the Railway Clerks' Association, now including the great bulk of the clerical staffs of the various railways, and a good proportion of the station-masters and supervising grades. This Association again represents a very distinct section of railway membership, and it is significant that in recent years it has shown

an increasing tendency to link up with the N.U.R., and that at its 1917 Conference a resolution was actually passed calling upon the Executive to consider and report to the members upon the possibility of a scheme for amalgamation.¹

The problem of the railway shops is a separate question of very great complexity; for the railway shops may be said to form in some sense a link between the industry of railway transport and the industry of engineering. They employ a large number of craftsmen belonging to various metal-working and wood-working Craft Unions, and also a considerable number of less skilled and unskilled workers. So far as the metal-working trades in the railway shops are concerned, they belong principally to the various Craft Unions in the engineering industry. The general labourers, on the other hand, and also many of the wood-workers, are already connected with the N.U.R., and the principal struggle in the Trade Union movement in recent years has been concentrated round the claim of the N.U.R. to control the whole body of workers employed in the railway shops.

The mining and the railway industries are the most obvious cases in which a form of organisation following the line of industry rather than craft is clearly dictated by the conditions of employment and the absence of a clear line of separation between skilled and unskilled workers. It is therefore in these industries that the movement towards industrial organisation has found its clearest expression, and the struggle between craft and industrial organisation has appeared in its most acute form. In certain other industries, notably in the textile and printing industries, the struggle between the two forms of organisation either does not exist or assumes quite different forms. In these cases there is no large body of unskilled workers separate from the body of craftsmen employed in the industry, but, on the other hand, there is a sharp distinction between a number of crafts, sections, or departments, which together include the great bulk of workers in the industry. The cotton workers will serve as an example of what is meant. The spinners and piecers, the card and blowing room operatives, and the weavers each form a separate section or department of the cotton industry. Each section is now organised in what is actually called a Craft Union, but these Craft Unions are in a very different position from the Craft Unions in such an industry as engineering, since among them they do include the great bulk of the whole personnel of the industry concerned.²

¹ This report, which has now been presented by the Executive and accepted by the Annual Conference of the R.C.A., is strongly against amalgamation at the present stage. For further particulars see p. 51.

² There are a number of small Craft Unions in the cotton industry, but these Craft Unions follow the same principle of organisation, and if we take the seven or eight Craft Unions in the cotton industry together, almost the whole effective personnel employed in the cotton industry in Lancashire and Cheshire is included in one Union or another.

There has therefore been in these industries practically no opening for the entrance of the General Labour Unions, since there is no mass of unspecialised workers for these Unions to organise. This does not abolish the distinction between craft and industrial unionism, or prevent the emergence of a movement making for effective combination of the whole personnel of the industry in a single organisation; but it does mean that these movements are very greatly simplified, and they become mainly movements for the amalgamation of existing Craft Unions, not complicated by the demand that large bodies of workers at present included in General Labour Unions not confined to any particular industry should surrender their present Trade Union allegiance, and throw in their lot with the industry in which they are for the moment employed.

The third group of industries is that around which conflict between craft and industrial unionism is likely to concentrate in the future, even if the present conflicts in the railway and mining industries are satisfactorily settled. In these industries we find a number of Craft Unions including skilled workers only. We find also a number of General Labour Unions, or in some cases of specialised Labourers' Unions confined to a particular industry, which include the great bulk of the less skilled or unskilled workers. Attempts to secure organisation on the lines of industrial unionism in these cases have obviously very much greater obstacles to overcome. Industrial unionism in these industries is not only a question of amalgamation or fusion of interests between a number of Craft Unions, but also involves the bringing into the organisation of those less skilled or unskilled workers who are at present organised in General Labour Unions not confined to the particular industry concerned.

This enumeration of particular difficulties prevailing does not suffice to present any general picture of the present conflict in the Trade Union world. It is therefore necessary to deal with the question rather more abstractly, and to try to sum up under a number of heads the actual forms which Trade Union organisation at the present time assumes.

SECTION 3.—A CLASSIFICATION OF TRADE UNIONS¹

(1) *The Craft Union*.—A Craft Union in its pure form consists of persons following a particular calling or occupation, possessing in common a certain skill, and aiming in common at a certain set of conditions of employment. Instances of such combination are found in such Unions as the Patternmakers' Association or the Associated Blacksmiths' Society in the engineering industry; the societies of overlookers or tape-sizers in the cotton industry; those of plumbers or stonemasons in the building industry; and in many

¹ Throughout the following section, reference should be made to the chart which forms the frontispiece of this book.

others. Often, however, the Craft Union form does not appear in such purity as this, and we find associated in a single union a number of kindred grades. This is the case, for instance, with the boiler-makers, who include angle-iron smiths, platers, caulkers, riveters, and various other sections. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers includes fitters, turners, machinists, millwrights, smiths, electricians, planers, borers, slotters, patternmakers, and a large number of other grades; the Weavers' Amalgamation includes weavers, winders, warpers, and a number of other grades; and there are other cases of the same kind. Thus, an organisation which is based on the craft principle may have either a very narrow or a very wide basis of membership. It may be confined to a single, narrow, specialised occupation, or it may include a large number of kindred crafts. In this connection it is important to notice that disputes may arise not simply between "craft" and "industrial" organisations, but also between craft organisations on a wider or narrower basis. Thus the A.S.E. is at present a kindred Craft Union, but it falls frequently into dispute, not simply with those who advocate the "industrial" basis of organisation, but also with those who advocate a separate Trade Union for each distinct craft group. The A.S.E. has frequently contended for the wider basis as against the blacksmiths, patternmakers, and other specialised Craft Unions, and it does actually cater for the crafts for which these specialised Craft Unions also attempt to cater.

A further complication of "Craft" Unionism occurs where a single craft is found in a number of different industries. Thus, there are mechanics or millwrights in almost every industry, and much the same can be said of enginemen. Clerks, too, occur in all industries as well as in commerce and in the public services. Carpenters and joiners are found not only in the building industry but also in large numbers in the shipyards, and the same applies to painters, plumbers, furnishing trades, and various other classes of workers. Thus, such Craft Unions as the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, the National Union of Enginemen, the National Union of Clerks, and the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners have a membership scattered through many industries.

(2) Akin to the craft basis of organisation is a basis of organisation which it is not easy to define. I will call it for the moment Material Trade Unionism. This form of organisation follows the line not of the precise craft followed by the worker concerned, but of the material on which he or she may happen to be working. Thus, there are many who advocate that the various unions of skilled wood-workers (carpenters, cabinet-makers, and joiners, furnishing trades, wood-cutting machinists, packing-case makers, etc.) should amalgamate into a single union, not on industrial lines, but on the lines of the material on which all these crafts in common work; and it is interesting to note that this is actually the form of organisation adopted by the largest Trade Union in Germany—

the German Metal-workers' Union. This Union, however, goes further, and includes skilled and unskilled workers alike. Here, again, it is further interesting to note that, even assuming Material Trade Unionism as a basis, the spirit of organisation may be wide or narrow. For instance, it is possible, as in Germany, to have a Metal-workers' Trade Union including workers on all forms of metal. But it is also possible, as in this country, to have specialised Trade Unions, including only workers on some one kind of metal, *e.g.*, brass workers, copper workers, iron and steel workers, etc., and disputes may arise here, too, between the narrower and the wider forms of organisation without any question as to the general basis on which organisation is to proceed. Material Unionism is not necessarily allied with Craft Unionism. Indeed, in Germany, the Metal-workers' Union is far more nearly akin to an Industrial than to a Craft Union. In this country, however, advocates of Material Unionism have generally stopped short at the advocacy of a union of skilled workers working upon the material concerned, and they thus find themselves in alliance with Craft Unionism of the A.S.E. type. Indeed, it is often difficult to distinguish the plans for an amalgamation of skilled workers on a "material" basis from plans for a kindred craft organisation of a number of associated crafts which are employed in, say, wood-working processes.

(3) Broadly contrasted with Craft Unionism in all its various forms is Union by Industry, which again may assume a number of different forms. Advocates of Union by Industry, broadly speaking, set out to combine in a single Union all those workers who co-operate in producing a common product or type of product, or in rendering a common service, irrespective of the degree of skill which they happen to possess. Thus they aim at creating one Union for the railway industry, one Union for the mining industry, one Union for the building industry, and so on. This form of organisation, however, passes over easily into a form of organisation which aims at copying exactly the present capitalist structure of industry, and at grouping in a single Union all those persons who work under a common employer or group of employers. This tendency is found to varying extent in different industries. It is especially strong in those cases in which a particular group of employers is clearly marked off from other employers either by some public or semi-public status or by some other special consideration. Thus, when a Union sets out to combine in its membership the whole personnel of the railway industry, it easily passes over into the endeavour to combine in membership all those persons who are employed by railway companies, whether they are engaged in rendering the service of railway transport, or are producing some quite different kind of product, *e.g.* locomotives or railway trucks, or are rendering some different kind of service, *e.g.* serving on ships or in hotels. In this case organisation by industry does not coincide with organisation following the lines of the employer by whom the workers are employed ;

but the two forms of organisation do approximate sufficiently to enable them to be very easily confused. Thus, Union by Industry properly so called, which groups together all the workers who co-operate in rendering a common service, is very easily confused in certain cases even by its advocates with what we will call "employment" unionism, which aims at following the lines of the employers' organisation. In other cases "employment" unionism diverges very widely indeed from Union by Industry. For instance, there are large numbers of gas undertakings or electricity undertakings which are owned by municipalities, and large numbers of others which are owned by private companies. On the lines of "employment" unionism the employees in municipal gas undertakings would be linked up with other municipal employees in a Union of municipal workers; whereas, on the lines of Union by Industry, the whole body of workers employed in rendering service in the production of gas would be grouped in a single Union irrespective of the type of employer under whom the men happened to be working. Similarly, in the co-operative movement, the attempt to unite in one Union all grades of co-operative employees cuts right across the lines of Union by Industry; for, in the first place, it separates the distributive workers employed by co-operative stores and wholesale societies from other distributive workers employed by retail shops and warehouses privately owned, and thus divides the personnel of the distributive industry into two distinct sections. Moreover, the co-operative movement actually engages largely in productive work, and therefore an inclusive Union of co-operative employees is compelled to organise in its ranks large numbers of productive workers employed in the boot and shoe, clothing, food, and drink, and other industries. We see thus that the principle of organisation by industry in some cases coincides or nearly coincides with organisation by employers, while, in other cases, a wide divergence appears between the two forms of organisation.

There is also a further difference which must be noted. The principle of organisation by industry is applicable in practice without great difficulty over almost the whole of the industrial population. Organisation by employment, on the other hand, is only easily practicable in certain cases, in which there exists a clearly marked type of employer differentiated from the general body of outside employers; e.g., the State, or the Postmaster-General; the Municipality or the Local Authority; the Co-operative Movement, the Railway Companies. Organisation by employer could hardly be applied to the great mass of privately owned industries, whereas union by industry is at least far more widely applicable.

The conflict between rival principles of organisation in the Trade Union movement has been described in terms of Craft Unionism and Union by Industry, because it is round these forms of Trade Union organisation that the conflict is mostly centred. There are, however, certain other forms of Trade Union structure which

demand special mention. Where Craft Unionism or Kindred Craft Unionism is adopted as a principle of organisation, it necessarily follows that the less skilled workers will remain unorganised, or else that they will form separate unions of their own. In Great Britain, since the 'eighties, the latter, as we have seen, has been the case, and there have grown up powerful Unions of unskilled workers. In some cases these have been Unions of labourers attached to a particular craft or industry, *e.g.* plasterers' labourers, builders' labourers, machine labourers. In other cases, and this is the position in the vast majority of cases, the less skilled workers have grouped themselves together irrespective of craft or industry in organisations which attempt to combine all those workers for whom no specialised craft or industrial Union exists. Thus, the General Labour Unions in this country, which now have a membership of about 750,000, include amongst their members a number of distinct types of workers: (a) unskilled workers in industries in which specialised Craft Unions of skilled workers exist, *e.g.* engineering labourers, builders' labourers, etc.; (b) workers of all sorts in industries or trades for which no effective special organisations exist, *e.g.* laundry workers, chemical workers, brewery workers, etc.; (c) workers in trades or industries for which, although special organisations exist, these special organisations do not cover the whole country, or have not been able to establish their claim to organise all the workers employed in a particular trade or industry, *e.g.* dockers, vehicle workers, etc. Sometimes these Unions go still further, and enrol workers who are clearly eligible for strong and recognised Craft Unions, and the tendency has become considerably more marked during the last few years, particularly in the case of the Workers' Union, which, in the ideas of some of its members and officials, seems to be regarded as a sort of embryonic Industrial Workers of the World with all Labour for its province. Apart from this tendency, the General Labour Union to-day tends to be an amalgamation of all the workers in the less specialised trades and industries, together with the great mass of less skilled workers in many highly specialised and organised industries.

A further type of Union is that which follows the line of sex. It is of course the case that the great majority of skilled Craft Unions admit only male workers, and would refuse to accept women on grounds of sex alone, even if they were otherwise eligible for membership. This is, in effect, a sex distinction, and constitutes the unions which do this sex unions, though they would not be generally recognised as being so. A clearer case is found in the unions which organise only women. These may be of any type, either Craft Unions, as in the case of the Society of Women Welders, or the Manchester Union of Women in the Bookbinding Trades; Unions on an "industrial" basis, as in the case of the Independent Women Boot and Shoe Operatives' Union, the Women Hosiery Workers' Union, or the Women Silk Workers of Leek; or they may be General

Labour Unions, such as the National Federation of Women Workers. This last is by far the most important of the specifically women's unions, and apart from it the great bulk of the women organised in Trade Unions, numbering at the present time well over 500,000 female members, are organised in unions which include both men and women, *e.g.* the Weavers' Amalgamation and other textile Unions; the National Union of Printing and Paper Workers, the National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen, and Clerks; the Amalgamated Union of Co-operative Employees, etc.

There is one further type of union which it is only necessary to mention in order to dismiss it with a word. This is the type which endeavours to include in a single organisation all workers irrespective of trade, craft, industry, sex, or any other consideration, on the basis merely of their own status within the capitalist system. Of this type is the organisation known as the Industrial Workers of the World. But since the two, or perhaps three, organisations in Great Britain which pass under this name have between them only the most insignificant membership, it is only necessary to record the type as one that is possible without laying any special stress upon it. Even in America, where the I.W.W. has been strenuous, it has, in fact, only succeeded in combining in its ranks the less skilled workers, including a considerable number of the male emigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe.

SECTION 4.—THE AREA OF ORGANISATION

No survey of the character of Trade Union organisation could be complete without a glance at the geographical area covered by the typical Trade Unions of to-day. A quarter of a century ago, there were already in most cases national Unions for the principal crafts extending over the whole of England and Wales. This national form of organisation has been maintained, but only in a few cases have the separate Scottish and Irish unions which existed a quarter of a century ago been absorbed in the larger English organisations. Scottish trade unionism still preserves, to a great extent, its separate national organisation with national characteristics of its own. It is true that the Scottish Railway Servants' Union was absorbed by the English Society in 1892, and that the Associated Carpenters and Joiners of Scotland amalgamated with the leading English Society in 1911, while the National Union of Scottish Mine Workers forms a district of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain. On the other hand, all the other building trades, the textile trades, printing trades, the agricultural workers, the ironmoulders, and a good many of the small metal trades still preserve separate Scottish Societies, which have, in many cases, not even close agreements with the corresponding societies for England. Most of the engineering and shipbuilding societies, however, cover Scotland as well as England

and Wales, while in the iron and steel industry and in other instances separate Scottish Unions compete with Unions covering the whole of Great Britain. It is further noticeable that there are no special Scottish General Labour Unions, the less skilled workers being included in the same Unions as in England and Wales. Many of the Unions which cover the whole of Great Britain maintain separate Scottish Councils with some powers of organisation and management.

Of Irish Trade Unionism it is nothing like so easy to speak, because organisation is in a far more embryonic stage, and also because there have been recent movements which may result in considerable reorganisation in the near future. There still exist all over Ireland small local organisations, and there are certain purely Irish Unions with a large aggregate membership; notably the Irish Transport Workers' Union, which became important under the influence of Larkin during the famous Dublin strike in 1913-14. Recently Irish national feeling has, to some extent, manifested itself in a tendency towards the formation and fostering of separate Irish Unions, even in cases where there has been, in the past, a common Union for Great Britain and Ireland. But this tendency has not greatly affected the largest Irish industrial centre, Belfast, and there seems no sufficient reason for supposing that it will result in a permanent severance of the Irish branches of the big national Unions from their English headquarters. It will, however, almost certainly mean the creation in a good number of cases of separate Irish Councils with considerable local autonomy, and this tendency has recently resulted in the establishment of a separate Irish Council by the National Union of Railwaymen.

Wales, apart from a very few specialised Unions, has no separate national Trade Unions, unless such bodies as the North Wales Miners and the South Wales Miners, which form part of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, are included. Apart from these, the principal Welsh Unions are the North Wales Quarrymen's Union, and certain small Unions connected with the tin-plate industry in South Wales; both cases in which, on account of the localisation of the industries concerned, the existence of comparatively localised Unions would call for no explanation even if the question of nationality did not enter in.

SECTION 5.—TRADES COUNCILS AND LOCAL LABOUR PARTIES

There has, however, been a determined effort during the last few years to call into being a national Labour movement for Wales alone. This has resulted in the establishment of Welsh Labour Conferences and Councils, and in the demand for separate Welsh Councils in the Labour Party and in various other organisations. This brings us to a wider form of organisation with which we have not, up to the present, dealt. The Trade Union Movement is not content with forms of organisation confined either to a particular craft or group

of crafts, or even to a particular industry. It also tends to form wider combinations of which the object is to emphasise and organise the essential community among all sections of the working class. Locally this tendency finds expression on its industrial side in the local Trades Councils—federations of local Trade Union branches and local societies in each particular district. The organisation of Trades Councils has proceeded apace during each period of intense industrial activity in the Trade Union movement; *i.e.* after the Dock Strike of 1889, in the movement of 1906 and the following years, and again during recent years. It is particularly rapid at the present time, and it is now safe to say that there are not many towns or districts of any industrial importance throughout Great Britain in which Trades Councils do not exist, unless it be under special circumstances such as are mentioned below. In many cases these Trades Councils have fulfilled not only industrial but also political functions, taking the place in the latter case of Local Labour Parties. In other districts there exists not merely a Trades Council, but also a Local Labour Party, which unites the Trade Union branches with the Socialist Societies and other similar bodies in the district for the purpose of local or national political work. Where no Trades Council exists, the Local Labour Party may also assume industrial functions. The number of Local Labour Parties is now being largely increased in connection with the reorganisation of the Labour Party under its revised constitution of 1918.

It is worthy of notice that, during the last few years, there has been a considerable movement among Trades Councils and Local Labour Parties towards federation. Thus Federations have sprung up in Lancashire and Cheshire, Yorkshire, Kent, South Staffs, and about ten other districts, and in two cases, Lancashire and Cheshire and Yorkshire, there are two county Federations, one of Trades Councils and the other of Local Labour Parties. There is little doubt that federation on these lines will be further extended.

The functions of Trades Councils and Local Labour Parties in the Trade Union Movement have never been at all accurately defined, and there seems to be very little approach to a clear idea on the subject among Trade Unionists themselves. The Trades Councils formed in the early days one of the constituent elements of the Trades Union Congress. They were expelled from the Congress on the motion of John Burns in 1894. This, however, did not suffice to check their progress, and with little or no central guidance they have sprung up all over the country, performing in the majority of cases very useful work in serving to emphasise what greatly needs emphasis in the Trade Union Movement—the essential community of interest among all sections of workers. They have suffered from a weakness resulting from inadequacy of funds and lack of definite functions, but against this weakness they have struggled with considerable success, and there can be no doubt that their accomplishment in the past has been on the whole a notable one.

SECTION 6.—THE NATIONAL TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Nationally there are at least three bodies which attempt to unite the whole Trade Union Movement. The Trades Union Congress includes over three-quarters of the whole membership organised in Trade Unions. It is an annual conference of delegates from affiliated societies, meeting for a week and then dispersing for the rest of the year unless it is called specially together to deal with some urgent problem. It appoints a Parliamentary Committee which meets at least monthly throughout the year to deal with current problems, and this Parliamentary Committee is the nearest approach to a central executive authority which the Trade Union Movement at present possesses. Its weakness is that it is not in a position to enforce any obligation upon the affiliated societies, and that although it has authority to speak for industrial Labour on quite general questions, it has not the power or the authority to deal effectively with disputes between one Union and another. Akin in some measure to the British Trades Union Congress, which includes delegates from all parts of the United Kingdom, are the special Congresses for the various countries within the United Kingdom. The Scottish Trades Union Congress and the Irish Trades Union Congress and Labour Party, however, are regarded and regard themselves as far less responsible bodies, and in attitude they tend towards the more militant view which is characteristic of Trades Councils and local Labour bodies generally. There has also been a tendency for Welsh Unions and branches of Unions to meet in special conventions to deal with problems which affect the Trade Union Movement from a specifically Welsh point of view.

Second of the great co-ordinating authorities in the Trade Union Movement is the Labour Party with its Scottish Advisory Council. This is a Federation of Trade Unions, Socialist and other societies, and Local Labour Parties, together with a number of Trades Councils admitted before 1918. The Trade Unions possess in this body the overwhelming preponderance of affiliated membership and voting strength. It is not, however, necessary to enter in detail into the functions of this body, since it confines itself to political questions, and leaves purely industrial matters exclusively to the Trades Union Congress.

Between these two bodies, the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party, there exists a Joint Board, consisting of an equal number of representatives from each organisation. The functions of this Joint Board, however, have recently been largely taken over by joint meetings between the Executive Committee of the Labour Party and the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, and it seems probable that this method of collaboration will be further developed.

The third co-ordinating authority is the General Federation of

Trade Unions, which started amid a great flourish of trumpets with an attempt to combine all labour in 1899, and now exists mainly as a sort of strike insurance society into which a large number of unions pay contributions at a regular rate per member, in return for the right to receive a regular rate of benefit when any of their members are on strike. The G.F.T.U. has the distinction of being the only British association affiliated to the International Federation of Trade Unions, a position which has arisen largely owing to the failure of the Trades Union Congress in earlier days to realise that international labour matters were any of their concern. The G.F.T.U. formed at one time one of the constituent elements of the Joint Board, which has been already mentioned. It was, however, excluded from the Joint Board in 1917 on the ground of overlapping, and it now remains an outside national body apart from the two great centralising Federations. It includes most of the cotton operatives, the dockers, and a great number of the smaller craft societies, but outside it are not only the miners, railwaymen, and engineers, but the greater part of the general labour Unions.

It will be seen that these centralising bodies do not form any very strong or effective nucleus for common Trade Union action. The Trades Union Congress is a body almost entirely without executive authority, and one which takes no direct part in the relations between employers and workmen. The G.F.T.U. does indeed provide strike benefits, but it too claims no control over the policy of the various organisations affiliated to it. At the same time, the Trade Union Movement has felt in recent years the need for some stronger form of combination than can be achieved even by the inclusion in a single Union of all the grades of workers employed in a particular industry. This has led very recently to the formation of the first great inter-industrial Federation in the Labour Movement. The Triple Industrial Alliance of miners, railwaymen, and transport workers consists of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain with about 800,000 members, the National Union of Railwaymen with over 400,000, and the Transport Workers' Federation, which is a federation of a number of societies with an aggregate membership of something short of 300,000. This Alliance deserves to be regarded as an effective industrial combination, since its definite purpose is to avoid the waste and overlapping and disunity which result from the taking of separate action by the various industries which it includes. A miners' dispute at once throws many railwaymen and transport workers out of work, and the reverse is the case in an equal degree. Accordingly these three industries have seen the value of a general combination which is to secure joint action in the case of any industrial dispute of national extent. Mention has been made from time to time of the possibility of bringing Trade Unions in other industries within the scope of the Triple Alliance, but no definite step has yet been taken in this direction.

It remains to be seen whether the extraordinarily powerful

machinery of the Triple Alliance will actually be put to the test. To some extent the very power of the machine presents an obstacle to its use, and its makers are fearful of the Frankenstein that they have made. There is accordingly considerable reluctance to call it into play, and it has never yet had to stand the test of action.

SECTION 7.—FEDERATIONS OF TRADE UNIONS

This account of the forms of industrial organisation would not be complete unless something was said of the various forms of federal growth between Trade Unions which cover a lesser area than the whole of industry, or even than the area covered by the Triple Industrial Alliance. We have already mentioned the fact that such Federations as the Miners' Federation, the National Federation of Blast Furnacemen, or the Weavers' Amalgamation, are in effect industrial combinations very much of the same type as single national Trade Unions whose branches possess a considerable degree of local autonomy. Such Federations, consisting of localised branches, are of a totally different type from the many other Federations which unite separate Trade Unions in particular industries or groups of occupations. Broadly speaking, if we follow the line of structure, these Federations may be classified under three principal heads.

(a) Such bodies as the Miners' Federation consist of localised unions, each of which covers a specialised area of its own, which is only a part of the area covered by the national Federation. In this case there is no overlapping between the various Unions; there is, in fact, only local autonomy within a national combination.

(b) Such Federations as the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation, or the new National Building Trades Federation, or the Northern Counties Textile Trades Federation, consist of a number of national Unions, each covering the same geographical area, but catering in the main for distinct sections of workers within a given industry. Thus the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation consists of Unions of compositors, bookbinders, printing-machine managers, pressmen, lithographers, etc., while the Northern Counties Textile Trades Federation consists of Unions of weavers, beamers, twistors and drawers, overlookers, etc. In such Federations as these there is again little or no overlapping. What the Federation itself does is to group together, on a more or less "industrial" basis, a number of distinct Craft Unions, each catering for its own section of workers within a particular industry.

(c) Such federations as the Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades Federation or the National Transport Workers' Federation consist of a number of Unions, many of which cater for the same class of worker, and actually compete one with another to secure members amongst these workers. In these cases overlapping between Unions exists on a large scale, and the Unions come together, not because they represent distinct grades of workers who can benefit

by co-operation, but because, even although they are competing one with another for members, they can increase their industrial strength in bargaining, and perhaps even settle their disputes one with another, by means of federal action.

Of course any of these forms of federation may cover a wider or a narrower geographical area. Thus the Midland Miners' Federation, which consists of local miners' associations in North Stafford, South Stafford, Warwickshire, and four other districts, is a federation of the first type, consisting of Unions covering a smaller geographical area than the Federation which they compose. The Local Textile Trades Federation in Burnley and Blackburn is of the second type, and consists of specialised Craft Unions which do not overlap; while a local Engineering and Allied Trades Federation, or a district Transport Workers' Federation, consisting largely of overlapping Trade Unions, falls under the third type.

The strength of the various Federations varies largely with the particular type to which they belong. It is obvious that it will be far easier to secure effective common action where there is no overlapping between the Unions which constitute the Federation, and that where overlapping exists there will be a constant tendency for the constituent elements in the Federation to quarrel one with another concerning membership, etc., instead of presenting a united front to the employers on industrial questions. Therefore Federations of the first two types tend to be considerably stronger and to assume larger industrial functions than Federations of the third type, which are almost necessarily weak in dealing with questions of industrial relations. Again, Federations of the first type tend to be stronger than Federations of the second type, since the Unions which compose them are homogeneous in character and consist of almost exactly the same type of members in every area. There is therefore comparatively little room for divergence of policy between the various local bodies composing Federations of the first type. Federations of the second type stand in an intermediate position. Any section may hold and put forward a distinct policy of its own in contravention of the policy of the other sections. But this tendency to differ is not so fatal to effective federal action as the existence of strong differences between the Unions composing a Federation of the third type, in consequence of overlapping, rivalry, and competition for members. Federations of the one or other of the above types are found in the great bulk of the industries of the United Kingdom, and in greater or less degree it may be seen that these Federations serve to reduce still further than was suggested in our opening sections the number of effective Trade Union combinations from a negotiating point of view. In most industries where there is more than one Trade Union concerned, each Trade Union does not meet the employer singly. A number of Unions through a Federation or joint association of some sort meet the employer together and adopt a common policy. This co-operation tends to

be carried through local as well as central negotiations. This is a marked feature of Trade Union action in most industries, and, unless its importance is recognised, the observer will tend to exaggerate the amount of disorganisation which at present prevails in the British Trade Union Movement. A few statistics, showing to what extent Trade Unions combine for purposes of industrial negotiation, will serve to drive home most strongly the point that there is nothing like the amount of disorganisation in the British Trade Union Movement which is often deemed to exist.

	Number of Trade Unions.	Approximate Number of Trade Unionists.	Approximate Number of Trade Unionists represented by Effective Federation or Confederation.
Coal Mining . .	68	869,000	800,000 (Miners' Federation of Great Britain)
Transport (other than Railways) .	50	341,000	200,000 (National Transport Workers' Federation)
Building . .	65	282,000	(National Federation now in process of formation)
Iron and Steel .	12	120,000	85,000 (Iron and Steel Trades Confederation)
Printing and Paper	31	105,000	95,000 (Printing and Kindred Trades Federation)
Cotton . . .	25	344,000	300,000 (United Textile Factory Workers' Association)
General Labour .	15	750,000	700,000 (National Federation of General Workers)

SECTION 8.—INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

British Trade Unions have not on the whole played an outstanding part in the International Trade Union Movement. The only British body affiliated to the International Federation of Trade Unions before the war was the General Federation of Trade Unions, with its three-quarters of a million members, and the Trades Union Congress had taken no part in international affairs, except by arrangement with the Labour Party in connection with international Socialist conferences. British Trade Unions had, it is true, a closer connection with some of the international Federations of workers in particular industries or groups of occupations. Thus, the Miners' Federation of Great Britain formed the most important unit of the International Miners' Federation, and the National Transport Workers' Federation was closely connected with the International Federation of Transport Workers. The International Textile

Workers' Federation was also dominated by the British representation, and, like the miners' organisation, had its headquarters in Great Britain. Other international Federations which included British representatives were the boot and shoe and leather workers, commercial employees, diamond workers, glass workers, hatters, lithographers, metal workers, postal workers, printing workers, tailors, tobacco workers, and wood workers, most of these having their headquarters before the war in Berlin.

These international Federations were for the most part very weak, and concerted action amongst them was not frequent or highly successful. They held periodical Conferences at which they debated matters of common importance: they occasionally supported one another in cases of serious dispute in a particular country; but beyond this and parallel agitations for industrial legislation they had not to any extent proceeded.

In fact, the vigour of the international movement, as it existed before the war, was largely concentrated in the International Socialist Bureau and the occasional Congresses held under its auspices. Upon this Bureau the British Labour Party, as well as the Socialist Societies, was represented, and by this means the Trade Union Movement played its part in international Socialist politics. It cannot, however, be said that the mass of the British workers, or even the leaders of the Trade Union Movement, had before the war paid any particular attention to the international aspirations of the Trade Union Movement. There were, of course, important and significant exceptions, but as a general rule British Labour had been somewhat insular in its outlook.

This is true even though British Labour has from the beginning played some part in the international movement. From its foundation in 1864 to 1872 the headquarters of the old International Working Men's Association were in London, and an International Socialist Congress was held in London in 1896, four years before the formation of the International Socialist Bureau. To this body, as we have seen, the Labour Party is affiliated, and under its auspices and under those of the Independent Labour Party and the British Socialist Party, British Trade Unionists have found their way to the International Congresses of Labour.¹

¹ At the Trades Union Congress of 1917, a new and important step was taken. The Congress decided to set up a bureau of information, and to include international information and co-operation with Trade Unions in other countries in the scope of this bureau. Following up this decision, the Parliamentary Committee, early in 1918, took the preliminary steps towards the bringing together of a conference of Trade Union bodies from various countries, with a view to the ultimate constitution of a new international Trade Union organisation.

PART II

THE GOVERNMENT OF TRADE UNIONISM

INTERNAL ORGANISATION : THE GOVERNMENT OF TRADE UNIONISM

FROM the structure of the various types of Trade Unions and the various forms of their inter-relation one with another, we now turn to their methods of internal administration and government.

On the whole there has been no great or sudden development in this sphere during recent years: rather there has been a gradual evolution corresponding to the growth in Trade Union membership, and a greatly increasing complexity of organisation following necessarily upon an increased complexity of structure. The only startling new development in Trade Union organisation is the rapid growth in numbers and importance and the substantial change in character of the "shop-stewards," and this change is still in process of development. The shop-steward has not yet found his proper place or function in the machinery of Trade Unionism, and although we shall have to deal in a subsequent section with the rapid rise in the last few years of the shop-stewards' movement, we shall hardly be able to point to any industry or Trade Union in which his new position is at all clearly defined or recognised.

SECTION I.—THE SINGLE-BRANCH UNION

Although the process of concentration in the Trade Union Movement has resulted in the disappearance of a large number of single-branch Unions by absorption into the larger national societies, there still remain, up and down the country, many hundreds of quite small Unions, ranging in size from a dozen members upwards, and consisting only of a single branch, with the simplest possible forms of internal government. Such Unions are usually governed in the last resort by a General Meeting of all the members, at which an Executive Committee is elected, probably by a show of hands. Their officers, who are also often elected at the General Meeting,

are seldom full-time officials, and continue to work at their trade, and to do the work of the Union in their spare time. In return for this work they receive as a rule only small payments of a few shillings a week or a few pounds a year, although in some cases the larger single-branch Unions do maintain permanent officials and pay full-time salaries. Each Union of this type will have its book of Rules, its periodical Balance-sheets, Reports, and Statements, but beyond this it will probably issue no printed documents.

This position is sometimes modified where the local Union forms a part of some larger federal organisation, as in the case of the cotton trades, the sheet-metal workers, coopers, brassfinishers, packing-case makers, and others. In such cases the federal body often issues Reports of its own, which incorporate Reports from the various single-branch Unions of which it is composed; and in these cases, as we can see, it is often difficult to say exactly where a federal organisation of single-branch Unions passes into a national Union with its local branches.

Naturally these smaller Unions remain practically unchanged in structure, since their very small financial resources and their limitations of membership make it impossible for them to develop new methods of government or to strike out in new directions. They therefore present few special features, and, in fact, play very little part in the general life of the Trade Union Movement and contribute comparatively little to its effective fighting strength. This does not apply to a certain limited number of larger single-branch Unions in the big towns, which are more closely related to the national Trade Union Movement, and which, by virtue of their larger membership, are enabled to take a more effective part in negotiations with employers, and in the framing of Trade Union policy. To this type belong such Unions as the London Society of Compositors, with 12,000 members, the Fawcett Association with 6000, the Birmingham Tinsplate Workers with 2500, and a number of others. Unions of this character, of course, usually maintain a paid secretary and staff, and, apart from the fact that they are localised and have only a single branch, resemble the larger national Unions in their methods of government. It is also noticeable that single-branch Unions of this type exist mainly in trades in which some form of workshop organisation, such as the printers' "chapel," supplies in some measure the requisite element of branch life. This is true not only of the London Society of Compositors, but also of the Fawcett Association and in other cases. In such circumstances there may even be single-branch Unions whose membership is not localised in a particular district. Thus, the Amalgamated Society of Paper Makers has its thousand members scattered in paper mills over the whole country, but has no local organisation outside the workshops in which the members are employed. This, however, is an exceptional case. Apart from these exceptions, single-branch Unions can, to all intents and purposes, be ignored or dismissed with a mere

mention in any account of the national Trade Union Movement as a whole. If they are to act effectively under modern industrial conditions they are practically compelled, except in the largest centres, either to merge their individuality in larger organisations, or at least to surrender a great deal of their autonomy to national organisations of a federal kind.

SECTION 2.—NATIONAL UNIONS

Trade Unions extending over an area wider than a single locality have inevitably, from the first, developed a more complex system of internal government, since they have had, from the very beginning, to face the problem of co-ordination between the various districts and the framing of a more or less comprehensive policy for their whole membership. Such national Unions vary greatly in their internal structure and methods of government. It is, however, possible, by describing two or three of the main types, to indicate generally the nature of their organisation and the tendencies which are at present at work. Three typical Unions may be taken in order to illustrate the general character of internal government. Take first one of the oldest of the national Unions—the Amalgamated Society of Engineers.

(a) The Amalgamated Society of Engineers consists to-day of upwards of 1000 branches. Of these some 300 are overseas branches in the Colonies and the United States. The home branches, some 700 in number, are largely grouped in a series of District Committees, each covering a more or less homogeneous industrial area. The area covered by, and the number of branches included in, a district vary widely. Thus the London District Committee includes 72 branches, extending over the whole metropolitan area. Glasgow District Committee includes about 60 branches, Manchester 49, Birmingham 32, Coventry 16, Sheffield 18, down to such districts as Hartlepool with 5, Rugby with 3, and Widnes (including Runcorn) or Norwich with 2 branches each. Where there is only a single branch in any district the branch functions in the same way as the District Committee for the larger centres. The District Committee or the Branch Committee in single-branch districts enjoys a considerable amount of autonomy in relation to local questions. Its reports must receive the sanction and approval of the Executive Council which sits in London; but, unless there is any violation of rule or national agreement, the District Committee can, to all intents and purposes, frame its own industrial policy locally.

This position is, however, modified by two conditions. In the first place, any action which involves expenditure from the central funds requires the sanction of the Executive, a sanction which is, in this case, effective. In the second place, the District Committee has purely industrial functions, and does not deal at all with Friendly

Benefits, which are purely a matter for the branches and the national organisation.

The District Committee consists of delegates from the various branches in the district. In the larger centres only a limited number of branches are at any time represented on the District Committee, and the representation passes in turn from one branch to another. The district secretaries are elected by vote of the members of the district: in most cases they work at their own trade and do the work of the district in their spare time. In certain of the largest centres, however, there are full-time district secretaries, paid out of the national fund; and in certain others full-time local organisers have been appointed, and are paid by levy on the members in the district.

Above the District Committees stands the national organisation. The national administrative body is the Executive Council, consisting of seven members, together with the Chairman and the General Secretary. The A.S.E. here differs in two respects from most other national Trade Unions. Its Executive consists of full-time officers, a practice which is found in only one other Society—the Boiler-makers. Secondly, and as a consequence of the adoption of the full-time principle, the Executive is much smaller than is the case in most other Societies. The chairman and the general secretary are both elected by the vote of the whole membership, and there are in addition a number of assistant secretaries elected in the same way. The Executive Council, on the other hand, is elected over geographical areas specially constituted for the purpose. It sits permanently at the headquarters of the Union, is generally entrusted with the framing of the national policy and its execution in detail so far as national questions are concerned. It also deals with reports from the District Committees on the "industrial" side of the Union's work, and from Branch Committees on the "friendly" side of the work. Different members of the Executive naturally specialise in different parts of the administrative work. It is, in fact, the Cabinet of the Trade Union, and it conducts all national negotiations with the employers.

Under the orders of the Executive Council are the Organising District Delegates, who are elected by the vote of the members in the thirteen divisions into which the country is divided for this purpose. The organising district delegate in the A.S.E. differs in certain material respects from the otherwise similar organisers who are maintained by most national Unions. His function is very largely that of co-operating with the various District Committees in his division in negotiations with employers, and only secondarily that of founding new branches, attracting new members, or organising in the ordinary sense of the term. The method by which he is elected gives him a considerable amount of independence, and in many cases he acquires a good deal of power in framing the policy of the Union within his own division.

So far we have been dealing purely with the administrative side of the government of the A.S.E. Legislative and judicial functions are assigned to two separate bodies, also consisting of delegates elected from specially constituted areas, and meeting normally at less frequent intervals. The judicial body is the Final Appeal Court, which sits annually to consider appeals by branches against the decisions of the Executive Council. The legislative body, which alone has power to change the Rules of the Society, is the Delegate Meeting, which meets ordinarily at very infrequent intervals of a number of years, but may be specially convened at any time should a crisis arise. During the war crises have arisen so frequently that this body has tended more and more to pass beyond directly legislative functions, and to acquire executive power. Several times it has taken negotiations out of the hands of the Executive Council, and has actually signed agreements with the Government. This change has arisen out of the special conditions created by the war, but it may possibly have far-reaching consequences on the constitution of the Society in the future. Early in the war the necessity arose for the Executive Council to find some better means of ascertaining the views of the membership rapidly on pressing questions than the means provided by the Rules, *i.e.* a Referendum of the membership. In these conditions the Executive Council adopted the course of summoning a body for which the Rules made no provision—a national Conference of Delegates from the various District Committees. Such Conferences met on two occasions, but upon the matter coming before the Delegate Meeting, the Delegate Meeting, instead of regularising the new procedure, declared that it should itself be the body to be consulted on such occasions, and in this way, as we have seen, the Delegate Meeting passed from being a purely legislative authority, and acquired a share in executive power. It is too early at present to say what will be the final outcome of this development, but it is clear that the need is now generally recognised for some form of national Conference or Convention which can be consulted rapidly by the executive body on questions of vital national importance.

The constitution of the A.S.E. has been described at this length because the A.S.E. is still the leading example in this country of the old type of Craft Union, and the developments which it has undergone are largely typical of the changes which other Craft Unions of similar type have experienced in recent years. We turn from the "new model" of 1851, as the A.S.E. has been often called, to the "new model" of 1913—the National Union of Railwaymen.

(b) The National Union of Railwaymen affords an instance of a constitution framed only a few years ago, on the occasion of the amalgamation of three of the principal Railway Trade Unions, and represents, at any rate for a certain type of Union—the Union that is "industrial" in structure—the most modern type of government that has yet been developed. The N.U.R., like all other national

Unions, is composed of a number of branches. Its branches are, however, far more variable in size than the branches of the Craft Unions described above, and the membership of a single branch runs in some cases into thousands. The branches in their internal organisation reproduce many of the same features of those of the A.S.E., except that the machinery of the N.U.R. is more centralised in character. The outstanding point of difference between the two Societies is that there is, in the N.U.R., no organisation at all corresponding to the A.S.E. District Committee. Each branch deals with all matters that arise in the course of its business directly with the Head Office. This, no doubt, is due in part to the fact that the railway service lends itself more easily to national organisation than the engineering industry. But it is also, in some respects, a sign of the times. The N.U.R. has indeed a system of District Councils which, to the outsider, would seem to correspond to some extent with the District Committees of the A.S.E. They are, however, in fact, entirely different. The A.S.E. District Committees, as we have seen, are executive bodies possessing considerable power and local autonomy within their own areas. The District Councils of the N.U.R., on the other hand, have practically no powers, and are purely propagandist bodies consisting of delegates from the various branches, without any obligation being laid upon the branch to join its District Council unless it so desires. The effect of this status upon the District Councils has been somewhat curious. Being irresponsible propagandist organisations, without direct power, they have become to a great extent the centres of the advanced section in Railway Trade Unionism. At their meetings questions of Trade Union policy are freely discussed; but, when it is desired to place one of these matters before the Head Office, the District Council is compelled to refer the matter back to the branches, which, in their turn, approach the Head Office as independent bodies. The District Councils are thus at most semi-official, and the unofficial side of their character has been emphasised during the last two years by their linking up into a National Conference of District Councils, and by their election of a National Committee drawn from the various Councils.

In addition to the District Councils, there are in many centres special Vigilance Committees, either for special grades or for all grades together. These Vigilance Committees usually represent the most advanced elements in the Union, and, on most issues, make common cause with the District Councils. The Liverpool Vigilance Committee and the London Electric Railway Workers' Committee are the most prominent. Until recently, several of these Committees were represented on the National Conference of District Councils. It has now, however, been decided to confine that body entirely to District Councils.

These last developments are, of course, as purely unofficial as the recent shop-stewards' movement in relation to the A.S.E., and

find no place in the recognised constitution of the Society. The N.U.R. is ordinarily governed by an Executive Committee of twenty-four members drawn from various districts, and representing various grades of the membership. The Rule providing for this election is interesting enough to deserve full quotation. It runs as follows :

Rule 4.—The twenty-four representatives on the Executive Committee shall be chosen by ballot on the single transferable vote system. The Union shall be formed into six electoral districts for this purpose. Within those districts the various grades shall be divided into four electoral departments. The electoral departments shall be classified as follows : (1) Locomotive department ; (2) traffic department ; (3) goods and cartage department ; (4) engineering shops and permanent way. The Executive Committee shall be chosen from each district triennially, one-third retiring each year ; but should two-thirds of the branches in any particular district be dissatisfied with their representative, they shall have power to demand a poll of the members of that district at the expiration of each year. The candidate receiving the largest number of votes shall hold office for the ensuing three years, and shall not be eligible for re-election for a period of three years, neither shall his branch be entitled to nominate for that period. Should a vacancy occur before the expiration of the term, it shall be filled for the remainder of the period by the candidate who obtained the next highest number of votes to the successful candidate at the election, provided he is employed on or in connection with any railway.

Thus it will be seen that an endeavour is made to represent both local and sectional groups, and that provision is made for separate sub-committees representing the various sections. In practice, however, these sub-committees do not seem to be of any considerable importance, though they might at any time become so.

This Executive Committee consists of members working at their trades, and meets in normal times quarterly, special meetings being held in addition as necessity arises. It conducts negotiations with the Railway Companies, and is invested, under the Rules, with almost complete power in relation to industrial policy, strikes, etc. In practice, however, its power is limited by that of the General Meeting, which corresponds roughly to the Delegate Meeting of the A.S.E. There is an Annual General Meeting consisting of delegates elected from specially constituted divisions ; and special General Meetings can be held at any time to discuss points of national importance. The General Meeting alone can alter the Rules. It discusses and formulates the national policy of the Union, and, in addition, the practice has grown up that any agreement into which it is proposed to enter with the Railway Companies should be submitted to it by the Executive Committee for ratification. It is thus, in effect, the ultimate governing authority of the Union on all large questions of policy. The N.U.R. has a chairman, general secretary, and four assistant secretaries, elected by national ballot,

and the comparative infrequency of the meetings of the Executive Committee naturally makes the power of these officials—and especially of the general secretary—very much greater than the power of the corresponding officials in such a Society as the A.S.E.¹ where the existence of a full-time Executive Council greatly restricts the power of the general secretary.

(c) The Miners' Federation of Great Britain—the third body of which it is proposed to describe the constitution—is of a very different type, being a federal organisation consisting of a considerable number of largely independent associations. The structure of the Miners' Federation has been roughly described in the first part of this Report. It consists, as we have seen, of eighteen separate units, some of which are themselves Federations. It will be best to begin by describing briefly the government of a typical unit in the main Federation.

The branch unit of the mining industry is the Lodge, *i.e.* the membership of the Union at a particular pit. The Lodge possesses a certain amount of autonomy in dealing with domestic questions relating to the particular pit it represents, but this autonomy tends to decrease as more power passes into the hands of the central Associations. Above the Lodge stands, in some of the larger Associations, the District, with its officer, the Miners' Agent, but not, as a rule, with any separate District Committee of its own. The next real unit of government is the Association itself, covering in most cases a county, but in some cases a very much wider area, *e.g.* South Wales. The Association is virtually self-governing on all questions relating to its own area; and can, on many questions, pursue an independent line of policy. On most questions it makes its own agreements with Employers' Associations, although in the case of the Federated Area, which includes North Wales and most of the important Associations in England, except those in the north-eastern counties, the various districts work together on a single Conciliation Board for the determination of general wages-rates. Each Association has its own Executive Committee and officials, and usually a Council drawn from the various Lodges. In the larger Associations this Council may be a delegate meeting of several hundred members. The larger issues of Association policy are generally decided by means of pit-head meetings, at which the Council delegates are instructed as to the manner in which their votes should be cast. The Referendum is also sometimes employed, but its use is, on the whole, on the decrease except on the largest questions.

The Miners' Federation of Great Britain, which includes practically all the organised collieries of Great Britain, is governed first by an Executive Committee, and secondly by an Annual Conference consisting of representatives from the various Associations. The

¹ It should be mentioned that the president of the N.U.R. is only a part-time officer.

National Conference meets annually, and, in addition, whenever it is specially summoned. It is the practice, moreover, to summon it whenever any important issue has to be decided, so that the Miners' Conference, consisting of delegates instructed by the various Associations, which have, in turn, elicited the views of their members through pit-head meetings, is the normal governing body of the Federation on all general issues. The great weakness of the Federation as at present organised lies in two things. In the first place it has no central financial resources, except such as it raises for special purposes by levies upon the affiliated Associations. This has proved a source of special weakness in the case of national disputes, since it tends to reduce the fighting strength of the whole body to that of the weakest Association. In the second place it has practically no offices and no staff of its own. Its president is also a full-time agent of one of the affiliated Associations, and its secretary is also secretary of another. These officers draw the greater part of their salaries from the local Association, and only receive small *honoraria* in return for their services to the Federation itself. These weaknesses, however, do not prevent the miners' organisation from being extraordinarily strong and cohesive on most general issues of policy. Doubtless it has been more easy in the mining industry than in most others to administer a huge organisation with a comparatively simple form of government, owing to the fact that the membership is largely concentrated in certain districts, and that the pit forms a natural unit of government which serves as a basis for the whole organisation.

(d) These three industrial organisations, very dissimilar in some respects, yet serve, by the general similarity of their constitutional machinery, to indicate the general character of Trade Union government in this country. It will be seen that the national machinery presents in all three cases many of the same features. The National Executive has, in all three, many of the same powers, and these powers are checked and regulated, in every case, by the existence of some more representative form of organisation, such as the Delegate Meeting or National Conference. District organisation presents greater dissimilarity, varying largely with the character of the industry in question. Branch organisation is, on the whole, much the same, except that in the case of the miners the pit, by forming a natural branch unit, gets rid of a problem which, as we shall see, is at present causing the gravest dislocation in the machinery of Trade Unionism in certain other industries, notably in engineering.

SECTION 3.—GENERAL SUMMARY

(a) *The Branch*.—With these considerations in mind, we can proceed to summarise the main features of Trade Union government at the present time. The smallest unit is in all industries the branch, with its branch meetings, branch committee, and branch officers,

and, in some cases, small branch funds. The branch, in addition to its constitutional position inside the Union to which it belongs, is generally the body affiliated to local organisations of federal character, such as the local Trades Council, or local Labour Party, or, in some cases, the local Federation of Trade Unions in a particular industry. There is considerable difference between Unions in their attitude to the question of branch affiliations to such bodies. Where branches have local funds or some financial autonomy, no difficulty usually arises; but where finance is centralised, special provision has to be made nationally to enable branches to join Trades Councils and similar bodies. Some Unions actively encourage their branches to do this, some remain wholly neutral, and a few actually discourage affiliation.

Perhaps the greatest problem of branch life in Trade Unionism at the present time is one at which we have hinted in speaking of the miners' organisation. In the case of the miners, as we have seen, the branch centres round a natural industrial unit—the coal-pit. In most other industries, however, the branch possesses no relation, or no very close relation, to any such industrial unit, and this is especially the case in the larger towns, in which a number of branches of the same Union exist. In these cases the branch is almost inevitably based rather on the place of habitation of its members than on their place of work, *i.e.* in London most of the members who live in Chiswick will belong to the Chiswick Branch of the A.S.E. or the Carpenters, although some of them may be working in Acton and some of them in Poplar, right at the other end of London. Consisting thus of a number of members who have no close common industrial interest, apart from their general interest in the conditions of their craft or industry, the branch can hardly form an effective unit for many sorts of industrial activity, at any rate in the larger centres. There is no doubt that this fact—this detachment of the branch from industrial realities—has helped the centralising process in the Trade Union movement, and the removal of independent functions from the branch to the larger authorities. Of this we shall say more when we come to deal with the shop-stewards' movement.

(b) *The District.*—The District Committee of the type described as existing in the A.S.E. exists primarily in the larger Trade Unions which have a number of branches in the same district. It has, in many cases, wide industrial powers, and considerable local autonomy, including the right to negotiate with Employers' Associations, and to make agreements subject to the sanction of the National Executive, but not, as a rule, the right to declare a strike, or at any rate to authorise the payment of strike pay. In the more centralised Trade Unions its powers may be very much more restricted, but in most Unions it retains the essential character of a local executive body enjoying, under the Rules of its Society, considerable power and authority.

The District Committee of this type must be sharply distinguished from the District Councils of such organisations as the N.U.R., Shop Assistants, or Postmen's Federation. These District Councils are purely organising and propagandist bodies, with no power of negotiation, and practically no authority under the constitution of their Societies. They may, none the less, have considerable unrecognised powers, and this, as we have seen, is especially the case in such Unions as the N.U.R., in which a strong "ginger" movement exists amongst the rank and file.

(c) *Advisory Councils*.—In addition to District Councils, some of the larger Societies extending over the whole of the United Kingdom have special Scottish or Irish Advisory Councils. The Irish Council of the N.U.R. has been mentioned already; and to this may be added the Scottish Councils of the Shop Assistants and the Carpenters and Joiners. There are also in certain Unions with a diverse membership special Councils or Conferences for particular sections, either local or national. The Dockyard Conference of the A.S.E. is one example, and the Shop Assistants furnish others. The National Union of Clerks attempt to meet the same need by what they call their "Guild" organisation. In other cases, as in that of the N.U.R. shopmen, no permanent machinery exists, but occasional advisory conferences are called as need arises.

(d) *National Executives and Officials*.—National Executive Councils are mostly bodies which meet periodically at quarterly or even rarer intervals, and consist of members who are actually working at their trades. Such bodies naturally cannot superintend effectively the day-to-day work of their Societies, which falls more and more under the control of the Head Office officials. To the Executive, however, are referred matters of general importance, and especially all matters which cannot be dealt with in accordance with precedents already laid down. They are, in a sense, the supreme executive bodies of their Societies; but their supremacy may usually be seriously threatened by a strong-minded general secretary. This is not the case where the Executive Council is a full-time body, sitting as a permanent Cabinet of officers; but as we have seen, there are only two Unions—the Boilermakers and the A.S.E.—in which such Executives exist. In these cases the Executive tends rather to reduce the general secretary and the other officials to a secondary position, and to assume wide powers in the direction of the Union's policy. It is hard to say which of the two methods is really preferable, though the fact that the permanent Executive shows no signs of spreading may be taken as a strong argument against it. It is perhaps worthy of notice that in certain Continental countries an effective method has been found of combining the two ideas, and there has been, in this country, a certain amount of talk which has not hitherto materialised, of experiments along the same lines. The German Metal-workers' Union is governed first by an Administrative Committee, consisting of a small number of full-time

officers, and secondly by a larger Committee including the members of the Administrative Committee, but also including a much greater number of members drawn directly from the workshops. The larger Committee possesses the wider authority, and preserves the right to override the decisions of the small Committee of full-time officers. By this method an attempt is made to strike a balance between the two dangers which beset the rival British methods of organisation—the danger that a full-time Executive may get out of touch with the bulk of the membership, and the danger that a part-time Executive may not possess the experience or coherence of policy which is necessary for the government of a great national organisation such as a modern Trade Union.

In this account of National Executives no mention has been made of certain obsolete survivals of antiquated forms of government. There still remain a small number, even of large national Unions, which cling to the device of the governing branch, or governing district, *i.e.* which draw their Executive Council not from the whole body of members but from a particular district in which their Head Office is situated. In most of these cases there is, in addition to such a governing District Executive, a wider body, often called a General Council, drawn from the whole country, but meeting at very infrequent intervals. This method of government is, however, very nearly obsolete, and, with one or two notable exceptions, only survives in certain badly organised Trade Unions, especially in the building industry.

(e) *Representative Meetings, National Conferences, and similar bodies* are intended to correct the attitude of the Executive Committees and full-time officers, by providing a better method of ascertaining, from time to time, the real will of the membership. There can be no doubt that their power in the Trade Union movement is on the increase, and that they are tending more and more to replace the Referendum over a wide range of issues. The history of the N.U.R. since its formation, and the recent history of the A.S.E. both furnish clear indications of the growth of the powers of such Conferences and Representative Meetings.

(f) *Delegate Meetings*.—In some Societies the same body is entrusted with the duty of representing the will of the membership on important issues of current policy, and also with that of making and revising the Rules of the Society. The two functions are, however, clearly distinct, and the distinction is clearly brought out in the case of the A.S.E. In this Society the Delegate Meeting is in its essence a legislative body, which has not until recently dealt at all with policy issues apart from the Rules. A body elected over wide geographical areas may be admirably adapted for rule-making without being at all suitable for day-to-day consultation on questions of policy. It was presumably a consciousness of this that led the A.S.E. Executive to call National Conferences, consisting not of representatives directly elected by ballot but of nominees of the

various District Committees. These Conferences were, however, ruled to be unconstitutional by the judicial body, the Final Appeal Court, and the Delegate Meeting has since assumed the power and functions with which it was proposed to invest the National Conference. In most Unions the two functions are in the hands of the same body ; but it is not clear that it is necessary that this should be the case.

(g) *The Referendum*.—The Referendum, while it shows no signs of dying out altogether, tends continually to be restricted to a narrower range of issues. Some old-fashioned Societies, particularly in the building industry, continue to take referenda of their whole membership month by month, often on most insignificant issues. But in the more modern Unions, although the Referendum is retained, it is in most cases an exceptional instrument of government to deal with broad, general issues. The improvement of the methods of representative government has made its use on small issues no longer necessary.

SECTION 4.—TRADE UNION FINANCE

It is impossible at all completely to understand the internal government of the Trade Union movement without taking into account its financial aspect. A Trade Union draws by far the greatest part of its income from direct contributions from its members : additional sources of income may exist to a certain extent, and these possess considerable importance in the case of old-established Unions which have had time to build up considerable reserve funds ; but even the richest and longest-established of Trade Unions are still mainly dependent upon the weekly contributions of their membership.

These contributions vary widely in amount from one Union to another. In the case of the General Labour Unions, whose members are for the most part in normal times in receipt of low rates of wages, the contribution is necessarily small, 3d. or 4d. a week being the most usual amount ; while in most cases some provision is made for the admission of women at even lower rates, ranging from 1d. upwards. Even these low rates of contribution are not the lowest that are found in the Trade Union movement, for there are certain types of Unions which pay no benefits to members, and therefore require only to raise a sufficient sum to cover their management expenses. Thus, in the Civil Service and in the Post Office contributions are, as a rule, exceedingly low, and are paid on a monthly, or even a quarterly, instead of a weekly, basis. For instance, the annual contribution to the Postmen's Federation is no more than 2s. 6d., while the Assistant Clerks' Association admits members for 1s. per annum. On the railways, again, benefits do not form an important feature of Trade Union work, employment is for the most part continuous, and the Unions have not built up any large funds ;

we therefore find that in the National Union of Railwaymen scales of contributions range from 2d. to a maximum of 5d. per week. The Miners' Associations are, for the most part, in a similar position, and pay few, if any, Friendly Benefits. In South Wales the contribution is only 3d. a week, while in most of the other districts it is 6d.

If we turn from these Unions consisting either of unskilled workers or of workers in a peculiar position in industry which makes them largely independent of Friendly Benefits, to the unions of skilled craftsmen, there is at once a great difference in the rate of contribution. The skilled Craft Unionist usually pays at least 1s. per week in ordinary contributions, and may frequently pay considerably more than this. In addition, most of the Craft Unions have regular levies upon their members, either for special purposes (contingent fund, superannuation fund, political fund, etc.), or are in the habit of supplementing their ordinary income by levies as a regular practice. Thus, in a Union of which the rate of contribution is 1s. 6d., a member may actually be called upon to pay something well over 2s., if not 2s. 6d. In one Union at least a percentage system has been adopted for securing a rate of contribution proportionate to the ability to pay of the member, the Steel Smelters having made the contribution payable dependent upon the rate of wages received. Thus, a member in receipt of 23s. per week pays 3d., while a member in receipt of 85s. pays 1s. 3d.

If we turn now to the question of benefits we shall find naturally that the Unions which have low rates of contribution pay only low rates of benefit, and further, pay benefit only for a much narrower range of purposes. A Craft Union with a high rate of contribution may pay benefit for strikes and lock-outs, unemployment, sickness, accident, superannuation, funeral, victimisation, legal aid, travelling, emigration, and various other purposes, while a General Labour Union, or any other Union with a very low rate of contribution, will probably confine itself to strike and lock-out, victimisation and legal aid, and will pay no Friendly Benefits of any kind whatever, unless it makes arrangements for such of its members as choose to subscribe voluntarily at a higher rate of contribution, and receive extra benefits as above described. There is, indeed, a very wide range of difference between one Union and another in the benefits paid, and even in the amount of benefit assured in return for the same contribution. This arises largely from the fact that it is impossible to place Trade Union Benefits, or the greater part of them, upon an actuarial basis. Sickness Benefit and Superannuation can to some extent be forecast, but Unemployment Benefit, and still more, Strike and Lock-out Benefit, are dependent upon the condition of the labour market, and the amount of industrial unrest prevailing at any particular time. A period of industrial tranquillity means at once a greatly reduced demand upon the Trade Unions for all classes of benefits, while one big strike may easily sweep away

the greater part of the reserve fund of the strongest Union. While, however, it is not possible to place all Trade Union benefits upon an actuarial basis, there can be no doubt that some Unions have in the past promised benefits at a rate considerably higher than would be justified by their rate of contribution. Thus, some of the older Craft Unions in the building industry have found themselves in considerable financial difficulties owing to the promise of too high rates of Superannuation Benefit, while the General Federation of Trade Unions, which, as we have seen, is a sort of Strike Insurance Society, to which Trade Unions pay contributions at a fixed rate, and from which they become entitled to a fixed rate of benefit in return, was forced, some years ago, to revise its scale of benefits, owing to the growing industrial unrest which had rendered it financially unsound. At least in the case of Superannuation, and Funeral, and other Friendly Benefits it would be possible for the Trade Unions to show a greater regard to actuarial soundness in fixing the relation of the benefits and contributions, but there is obvious difficulty in this, particularly on account of the democratic forms of Trade Union government. It is not always easy to make the member, particularly the older member, see that the rate of, say, superannuation pay must be reduced if the Union is to remain financially sound. There can be no doubt that in the majority of the old-fashioned Craft Unions Superannuation Benefit is to some extent a mortgage on the future, and is paid out of the contributions of the younger members. There is no necessary objection to this, provided a balance is maintained and the funds are not swallowed up to an undue extent. Where this happens the result will be that young members will cease to flock into the Union, and the old members may find themselves faced with a dwindling reserve fund and the impossibility of maintaining benefits on the old scale. This, indeed, has actually occurred in some of the smaller Societies.

A table given in the Appendix to this volume will provide some indication of the nature of Trade Union expenditure upon most types of benefit. It is, of course, very difficult to furnish figures which are a real indication of the proportions borne between the various benefits, since inevitably they must vary widely from year to year and from period to period. The industrial unrest in the years immediately preceding the war enormously increased the proportion of money spent upon Dispute Benefit of various kinds, while a period of bad trade will, of course, at once reflect itself in a big increase in Unemployment Benefit. A further difficulty in disentangling the amount spent for the various purposes arises from the fact that some Unions do not separate unemployment and strike pay, but prefer to give unemployment pay in both cases with an extra allowance from the contingent fund in the case of strikes.

If we turn to the other considerable items on the expenditure side of the Trade Union balance-sheet, we shall find that much the largest of these is management expenses, that is to say, the upkeep

of the general and district offices, salaries of officials, local and central, and administration of every sort. This, again, is an amount which fluctuates widely from Union to Union. An unskilled Union can afford to spend only a comparatively small sum per member on organising and managerial work, but its expenditure upon these things is a far higher proportion of its total receipts than the proportion spent by a highly rated Craft Union. Thus, out of total receipts of £226,202 the following group of Unions spent, in 1913, 59.9 per cent of their total income on management expenses :

Name of Union.	Total Expenditure. 1913.	Expenditure on Management. 1913.	Proportion of Total spent on Management. 1913.	Expenditure per Head. 1913.	Expenditure on Management per Head. 1913.
Workers' Union.	£ 36,467	£ 14,923	Per cent. 40.9	£ s. d. 0 8 0	£ s. d. 0 3 2½
National Union of General Workers .	48,619	29,845	61.3	0 7 4	0 4 6½
Dock, Wharf, Riverside, and General Workers' Union .	24,543	18,241	74.3	0 10 2½	0 7 7
National Union of Railwaymen . .	116,573 ¹	72,670 ¹	62.4 ¹	0 8 8½ ¹	0 5 5 ¹
Total . . .	226,202	135,679	59.9		

¹ The year of the amalgamation.

These are all Unions which, with low rates of contribution, and low management expenses per head, are spending on management a high proportion of their total receipts.

In the Unions with a high contribution the actual expenditure per head on management is, as a rule, very much higher; but the proportion to total receipts is lower, as will be seen from the following table :

Name of Union.	Expenditure Total. 1913.	Expenditure on Manage- ment. 1913.	Proportion of Total spent on Manage- ment. 1913.	Expenditure per Head. 1913.	Expenditure on Manage- ment per Head. 1913.
	£	£	Per cent.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners	237,950	41,800	17.6	2 14 3	0 9 6½
Friendly Society of Ironfounders	123,352	12,549	9.8	4 13 10	0 9 4½
London Society of Compositors	52,567	4,824	9.2	4 10 0	0 8 3½
Amalgamated Society of Engineers	403,378	66,387	16.5	2 9 2	0 8 2
Steam Engine Makers Amalgamated Associ- ation of Operative Cotton Spinners, etc.	30,054	5,587	18.6	1 15 11½	0 7 8½
	90,195	15,881	17.6	3 15 10	0 13 4
Total	937,496	147,028	15.7		

The higher expenditure results largely from the keeping of a larger staff of permanent officials, and from the undertaking by those officials of a large amount of expert work. For instance, many Craft Unions, *e.g.* the Boilermakers, Shipwrights, Spinners, Weavers, maintain permanent officials in the various districts whose business it is to deal as experts with questions relating to the fixing and adjustment of piece-work prices, while, as a rule, a skilled membership requires, or at least receives, considerably closer attention than the members of less skilled organisations.

Every Union has a reserve fund, that is to say, a balance which it has built up by saving out of contributions over a period of years. This reserve fund may occasionally be swept away as a result of some great strike or long period of distress, but attempts are at once made to build it up again when normal times return. The amount of these reserve funds per member of the Society concerned again varies from Union to Union, and from group to group. Naturally, out of their smaller income per member the unskilled Unions cannot build up high reserve funds, although the years of the war, in which the number of disputes has been so small, have furnished them with an opportunity for increasing their reserves considerably. The following Table will serve to illustrate the position so far as some of the low-contribution Unions are concerned:

Name of Union.	Membership.		Funds at end of		Reserve per Member.					
	1913.	1916.	1913.	1916.	1913.			1916.		
Workers' Union .	91,000	245,000 ¹	£ 11,743	£ 91,067	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
National Union of General Workers .	134,538	133,214 ²	30,298	54,644 ²	0	2	7	0	7	5½
Dock, Wharf, River-side, and General Workers' Union .	48,060	65,000	30,709	46,050	0	12	9½	0	14	2
National Union of Railwaymen .	267,611	340,511 ³	476,435	812,618	1	15	8	2	7	9

¹ Conjectural.

² These figures relate to 1915, no later figures being obtainable.

³ Including members on active service.

Thus it will be seen that the average worth of one of the Unions with low rates of contributions is only something under £2, except in quite abnormal times. Unions with high rates of contribution, on the other hand, have, in many cases, built up very substantial reserve funds; but against these substantial reserves have to be set correspondingly heavy liabilities.

Name of Union.	Membership.		Funds at end of		Reserve per Member.					
	1913.	1916.	1913.	1916.	1913.			1916.		
			£	£	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners	86,972	92,575	123,143	232,061	1	8	3	2	10	1
Friendly Society of Ironfounders . .	26,279	27,209	77,901	143,309	2	18	4	5	19	5
London Society of Compositors . .	11,650	11,935	50,275	68,566	4	6	4	5	14	10½
Amalgamated Society of Engineers . .	161,055	230,231	936,233	1,743,554	5	16	3	7	11	5½
Steam Engine Makers	16,660	21,850	128,825	200,691	7	14	8	9	3	8
Amalgamated Association of Operative Cotton Spinners, etc.	23,787	23,885 ¹	545,612	513,665 ¹	22	18	9	21	10	1

¹ These figures relate to 1915, no later figures being obtainable.

As we shall see in dealing with the question of amalgamation, financial considerations often play an important part when amalgamation is under discussion. Differing rates of contribution and benefit, and differing management expenses, are often serious obstacles to the achievement of unity, even when the desirability of fusion is clearly recognised on both sides.

The financial administration of Trade Unions is, in the main, in the hands of the ordinary salaried officials, drawn directly from the

ranks of the membership. The outside expert is called in in some cases to deal with particular difficulties, but usually the Trade Unions train their own men for administrative work. On the whole there is no doubt that this training has been a success, and that the funds of most Unions are administered with considerable skill and capacity. Branch work and district work furnish a useful training-ground for the membership, and those who rise to positions of financial importance in the Union have usually served a considerable apprenticeship in the branch or district organisation. On the whole the administration of Trade Union finance is conservative and cautious; any departure from conservative methods results, as a rule, not from the action of the administration, but from pressure by the membership. Cautious financial administration is perhaps less a feature of Trade Unionism to-day than it was thirty years ago, but it still persists to a very considerable extent, particularly in those Unions which have the highest contributions and benefits, and reserve funds. Indeed, the charge has often been brought against particular Unions that they think more of their funds than of the need for industrial action. How far this charge is justified in particular cases it is not possible to argue here. As a general indictment, however, there seems little evidence behind it, except in the sense that those directly entrusted with the financial management of the Societies are apt to think primarily of finance, but to be checked in their action by the attitude of other officers and executive members who are not primarily concerned with the financial side of the Union.

PART III

THE PROBLEMS OF TRADE UNIONISM

FROM our general survey of the structure and internal government of the Trade Union movement we must now turn to some of the principal problems with which it is at the present time confronted. It is not possible, of course, in a brief space to give any really adequate account even of the few problems which we propose to select for treatment. For a more adequate account of some of these the reader is referred to the bibliography at the end of this book, and especially to separate studies on various industries and problems which are published from time to time by the Fabian Research Department.

SECTION I.—AMALGAMATION AND FEDERATION

In the first part of this book I have referred to the development inside the Trade Union movement of closer unity by the amalgamation of various Trade Unions, but I have so far dealt with amalgamation only in so far as it is connected with changes that have already taken place. It now remains to deal with those wider movements towards amalgamation which have not yet achieved their object, but which are none the less playing an important part in bringing various Trade Unions together. These movements may be divided into two types—official movements, in which the Executive Councils and other governing bodies of various Unions meet for the purpose of achieving closer union of forces; and unofficial, or rank and file, movements, in which the rank and file members of different Unions meet for the purpose of propaganda on the subject of amalgamation and of stirring the official bodies to act more promptly and decisively.

Since 1911 both these movements have been in a state of considerable activity which the war only momentarily interrupted. The industrial unrest of 1911 and the following years brought once more to the surface the difficulties of Trade Union organisation, the enormous amount of sectionalism and overlapping which still exists, and the need for greater concentration of activity in the face of the

growing combination on the part of the employers, and the increasing element of State intervention. Probably it would be true to say that at no time between 1911 and 1914 were movements of this sort not afoot in some important industry. The Transport Workers' Federation was formed as the result of a big campaign in 1911, and had among its objects the promotion of amalgamation among the constituent Societies. The negotiations which culminated in the formation of the National Union of Railwaymen were in full swing during 1912. Proposals for a general amalgamation of the Transport and General Labour Unions were the subject of many conferences during 1913 and 1914; while during the war the process of absorption of small Societies by large ones has steadily continued, and the rank and file movement in favour of amalgamation has gained considerably in force. These are only a few instances selected from a very much greater number. There is, indeed, hardly an industry—if there is an industry at all—in which projects for amalgamation on a large scale have not been seriously mooted, and have not been the subject of discussion between the Executives and rank and file of the various Unions concerned.

Despite this great activity on the part of the amalgamationists it is true that not a great deal has been achieved. The National Union of Railwaymen stands out, as we have previously said, above all other examples of the new type of amalgamated Union. This, however, does not mean that the movement towards amalgamation has not made considerable headway, or that the state of feeling inside the various Unions remains as it was before. There can be no doubt that in almost all Unions a widespread sentiment in favour of amalgamation has been created, and that sooner or later this sentiment will achieve very much wider results than at present seem imminent.

The official movements in the direction of amalgamation have come usually as the result of pressure from the rank and file, but their greatest success has been achieved in those instances in which officials and rank and file have been united on the question. Where mere rank and file movements have been found without adequate support from officials and Executive Committees, although there may have been considerable activity on the part of the amalgamationists, the results are, as a rule, meagre. The reason for this will appear more clearly when we have glanced at the difficulties that stand in the way of amalgamation.

Until 1917 the greatest single difficulty was without doubt the position of the law regarding amalgamation. Under the old Trade Union Acts two Trade Unions could not amalgamate unless each, in a ballot vote of its members, secured a majority of two-thirds, not merely of those voting, but of the whole Society. This barrier was proved not to be insuperable in the case of the N.U.R. It was none the less a very serious difficulty indeed, since the majority required represents a very much higher percentage of the member-

ship of the Union than can usually be persuaded to vote, even on the most vital issues. There are many reasons which make it difficult for a Trade Union to poll the votes of anything like its complete membership. (To begin with, there are at any time numbers of members out of work, working away from home or absent for other causes, whose votes it is exceedingly difficult to secure, even if it is possible to trace the members within the necessary time.) The law, as it stood till 1917, was indeed an absurdity, and, although the position has been improved by the Trade Union (Amalgamation) Act of 1917, it is still by no means satisfactory. There seems to be no reason why two Trade Unions should not decide to amalgamate by a bare majority on either side, whereas the law still makes it necessary that 50 per cent of the members should vote, and that the proposal for amalgamation should secure a 20 per cent majority of those voting.

Besides this legal barrier there are many other difficulties in the way of Trade Unions which desire to amalgamate. The most important of these is probably the financial difficulty, and this is especially grave in the case of those Unions which pay high benefits for sickness, superannuation, unemployment, etc., and which therefore necessarily have large reserve funds to meet large potential liabilities. Where the two Unions which propose to amalgamate are of varying financial strength it may often be exceedingly difficult to secure a basis which is satisfactory to both parties. The weaker Union may find itself confronted with the possibility of reduced benefits, or of higher contributions for its members in the new amalgamation. The stronger Union may regard it as unfair to admit the members of the other Society on terms more favourable than their own members have secured by their accumulated contributions. These may seem small matters; but they often, and almost of necessity, bulk large in the eyes of those who have to administer the financial affairs of the Societies concerned. They are not insuperable difficulties, but they demand considerable statesmanship before they can be overcome.

Next in importance comes the difficulty of officials. Amalgamation between two Societies means making one general secretary grow where two grew before, and, even if the amalgamated body is likely to be far more powerful than either of the two Societies could be apart, there may be an unwillingness on the part of either of the general secretaries to give way to the other, particularly if the two Societies concerned are more or less equal in strength. In the case of the smaller Societies the difficulty often arises of absorbing the officials whom they have maintained; but it is usually found essential, in order to achieve success in any project of amalgamation, that all the full-time officials of the Societies concerned should be guaranteed posts with at least the same salaries under the new Society. This presents the less difficulty because most Trade Unions are at present understaffed. The taking over of existing officials does not always

meet all the objections, but usually, where there is a will, a way round the difficulty can be found.

The above difficulties exist even where the case for amalgamation between two or more Societies is perfectly clear, *i.e.* where the Societies are rival Societies catering for the same class of members. Where this is not the case it is of-course often open to question whether amalgamation is or is not the right policy, and at this point controversial opinions concerning the right form of Trade Union structure enter into the question. For instance, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers is, as we have seen, a kindred craft Society, including workers in a large number of different engineering crafts. When amalgamation between this Society and one of the specialised Craft Unions, catering only for a single engineering craft, comes under discussion, it is clear that a distinct issue of policy is involved. The members of the Craft Union—say the patternmakers¹—will undoubtedly be divided on the issue. Some will say their best interests will be served by uniting with other classes of engineering workers; while some will maintain that the patternmaker's distinctive position renders it essential that he should maintain a separate craft organisation of his own, and should have, at the most, only federal connections with workers in allied crafts. Still more is there room for difference of opinion when amalgamation is proposed on an even wider basis than that of kindred crafts; when, for instance, it is proposed that all the various Societies in the cotton industry—card-room operatives, spinners, weavers, overlookers, etc.—should form themselves into a single Cotton Industrial Union. The difference is most acute of all in those cases in which there is a wide gulf separating the skilled and unskilled workers, and when it is proposed that skilled and unskilled alike, in whatever Unions they are now organised, should join together in a single Industrial Union covering all sections of workers employed in the industry.

Rank and file movements in the direction of amalgamation have almost always been of an Industrial Unionist character, that is to say, they have desired to bring about amalgamation into one Union of all workers employed in a particular industrial group. A number of these movements on Industrial Unionist lines sprang up in 1912 and the following years under the auspices of a rank and file Committee which set out with the object of "amalgamating all existing Trade Unions," and formed for this purpose separate Amalgamation Committees in a number of different industries, notably metal, building, printing, etc. Of these Committees the only one which has shown continued vitality up to the present time is the Metal, Engineering, and Shipbuilding Amalgamation Committee, which is now a national propagandist body with branches in many towns,

¹ The present Patternmakers' Society is actually a secession from the A.S.E., the Patternmakers having been absorbed into the Amalgamated Society in 1851. Most, but not all, of them subsequently seceded on the ground that their special craft interests were not sufficiently considered in the amalgamation.

and with a considerable following among the younger engineering workers of all trades, skilled and unskilled alike. As the policy of this body comes into sharp conflict with the official amalgamation policy in the industry, it will perhaps be well to define the contrast, in order that the difficulties of the position may be clearly seen.

There are, in engineering, a large number of distinct Craft Unions of which the A.S.E. is by far the largest. There are also a number of General Labour Unions with a considerable and rapidly increasing membership among the less skilled grades. Official attempts at amalgamation have all been concentrated on the attempt to amalgamate all, or some of, the Craft Unions in the industry, whereas the rank and file movement has gone steadily for amalgamation of all Unions, skilled and unskilled alike. This policy has brought it up against the very difficult situation created by the existence of the General Labour Unions stretching across many different industries and consisting mainly of the less skilled workers. The official attitude in this case, as in others of the same sort, does not necessarily arise from any opposition to union by industry, but may be dictated by the desire to reduce the difficulties in the way of amalgamation. For instance, in a series of articles published in the *A.S.E. Journal* early in 1914, it is argued that the only way of securing solidarity in the engineering industry is by making a beginning with the amalgamation of a few of the largest craft and kindred craft Societies, and the amalgamation of the A.S.E., the Boilermakers, and Ironfounders is put forward as a reasonable first step.

The rank and file movement towards amalgamation has shown signs during the last year or two of a change in character. The growth of the shop-stewards' movement, particularly in the engineering industry, has created another form of rank and file organisation which, while it is usually also amalgamationist, does not make amalgamation its sole or even its primary object. Much of the energy which before the war went into the Amalgamation Committees is now being diverted into other channels of rank and file organisation.¹

It cannot be said that the results of the amalgamation movements, official and unofficial, are as yet at all proportionate to the effort expended, or that the success achieved at all adequately reflects the state of opinion in the Trade Union world. There is no doubt that, in many industries and cases in which amalgamation has not yet been achieved, any ballot on the general question would show a huge majority in favour of amalgamation. It is therefore probable that the movement, so far from burning itself out, is still only at the beginning, and, in particular, that the changed conditions created by the war will hasten amalgamations on the side of Labour as they are already hastening them on the side of Capital.

¹ For further particulars of the shop-stewards' movement, see pp. 53 ff.

It will be well before we leave this subject to say a little more with regard to the threatened differences of opinion that are at the back of the quarrels which often occur in connection with amalgamation. As we have seen, the rank and file movements are mostly of an "Industrial Unionist" character. This does not mean that they are necessarily animated by the tenets of strict Marxian Industrial Unionism; but they do desire a linking up on industrial lines of skilled and unskilled in the same Unions. One particular difficulty which arises in the interpretation of this conception of "Union by Industry" is the position of clerical workers. The advocates of Union by Industry have, as a rule, paid comparatively little attention to the position of clerks, who, in most industries, form only a small proportion of the total number employed. This does not apply to the iron and steel industry, where the Unions included in the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation do endeavour to enrol clerks in their membership. In the particular case of the railways, however, where the clerical element is both exceptionally numerous and unusually well organised, the question whether an Industrial Union should include clerks along with the other grades has recently been the subject of a great deal of discussion. The 1917 Conference of the Railway Clerks' Association, after debating the question, referred it to their Executive Committee, with an instruction that they should get in touch with the National Union of Railwaymen and consider the possibility of formulating a scheme of amalgamation. This was done, but the result was that the Railway Clerks' Executive reported strongly against fusion at the present stage, while stating clearly that their opposition was not to be regarded as final and permanent. One great difficulty which arises in connection with the special position of the clerical services is the doubt in the railway clerks' minds whether the manual workers would be prepared to support the different demands which they would be likely to put forward. For instance, the working week of the clerk is, as a rule, shorter than that of the manual worker. Salaries are in many cases higher, and working conditions are considerably different. The clerks are not satisfied that railwaymen would fight in order to secure what they might regard as preferential treatment for the clerical grades. In view of these doubts it was strongly urged that amalgamation is not possible at the present stage, or without very considerable guarantees of autonomy as well as of complete common action inside any composite organisation. The other problem which raised a difficulty in the case of the railway clerks is one which applies also in many other industries. The Railway Clerks' Association has achieved very great success in the organisation of the higher grades of the railway services, particularly station-masters, agents, and chief clerks. The N.U.R., although to some extent it does organise supervisors in the operative grades of the service, and has indeed a membership of several thousands among them, has not progressed anything like so far as the Railway Clerks' Association

in this direction, and in particular has not secured from the Railway Companies anything like the same measure of recognition of its right to represent such workers. This clearly raises a problem which applies not simply to supervisory classes of clerical workers, but to supervisory workers of all kinds and in all industries. The problem of the relation of supervisors, foremen, etc., to rank and file Trade Unionists has already become acute in the Post Office, and is showing signs of becoming acute also in the engineering industry. The achievement of Union by Industry in the narrower sense, by the union of skilled and unskilled manual workers in a single Society, would clearly raise up further problems of amalgamation and absorption in relation to such "higher" grades of workers.

Apart from the National Union of Railwaymen, by far the most solid achievement in the way of fusion during recent years is the Iron and Steel Trades *Confederation*, which should be sharply distinguished from the *Federations* (without the "con") mentioned on the next page. The Confederation embodies, in effect, a plan of amalgamation by instalments. The three Societies which joined to form it undertook to enrol no new members. Under the Confederation they formed a new "Central Association," the British Iron, Steel, and Kindred Trades Association, in which all new members are enrolled. In addition, members of the older Societies may transfer to the new Association, and this transference is being gradually accomplished. By lapses, deaths, and transfers, the membership of the older Societies will thus continually dwindle, while the membership of the new Society, backed by the organising work of the whole Confederation, grows rapidly. All the negotiating work of the Central Association, and all such work affecting the members of more than one Society, is in the hands of the Confederation, which thus acts already as an effective industrial unit, even before the process of transference is complete. In February 1918, fourteen months after its formation, the Central Association had already nearly 60,000 members, of whom 34,000 were new members, and the rest transfers from the old Societies. In addition, between 25,000 and 30,000 members probably remain in these Societies.

There would seem to be no adequate reason why the very successful precedent set by those responsible for the formation of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation should not be followed in other industries. It has the great advantage, first, that it avoids altogether the necessity for a ballot hampered by legal restrictions, and secondly, that, by leaving the existing Societies nominally in being, it makes easier a clean cut from obsolete traditions and the framing of an up-to-date constitution to suit the needs of the time. The Confederation has so far found no imitators; but there are signs that it is being considered in other quarters. When, for instance, the Delegate Meeting of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers had before it in 1917 the question of amalgamation, the

draft of a similar scheme was discussed and remitted to a special committee for further examination.

Before we dismiss the question of closer unity between the various Trade Unions it is necessary to say something of federation as well as of amalgamation. We have already analysed the various types of federation in the first part of this Report. Here we need only say that the process of federation still continues in many industries, the most recent additions of importance being the formation of a National Federation of Trade Unions in the building industry, and of a strong National Federation of General Workers including all the big general labour Unions except the National Federation of Women Workers. It is probable, but not certain, that war-time developments, and more particularly the Whitley scheme for Joint Standing Industrial Councils, will lead to further movements towards federation in those cases in which amalgamation cannot be secured at present, if proposed at all. There has been, for instance, in connection with wages applications during the war, a marked tendency towards common action amongst Trade Unions which had no basis for unity in pre-war times, and in some cases there is little doubt that these extempore forms of combination will result in some sort of permanent federal body. It may be mentioned that some of the Federations which existed before the war have been considerably strengthened during the war period. This applies particularly to the Transport Workers' Federation, which has profited to the full by the need for common action in regard to wages movements amongst the various Unions catering for dockers, vehicle workers, etc. The Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades Federation, on the other hand, to which we referred in the first part of this Report, has lost ground, and with the secession of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers has ceased to be representative of the engineering industry as a whole, while the United Textile Factory Workers' Association has once more been strengthened by the healing of an old quarrel, and the renewed affiliation of the Amalgamated Association of Card and Blowing Room Operatives, which is the second largest Amalgamation in the cotton industry.

SECTION 2.—THE SHOP-STEWARDS' MOVEMENT

The most significant single development in the Trade Union world during the war period has undoubtedly been the growth of the shop-stewards' movement, principally in the engineering industry. The shop-steward, or his equivalent, as a minor semi-official of the Trade Union, existed, as we have seen, under a variety of names long before the war, but his pre-war functions were, in most Unions, of little importance, as may readily be seen from the functions assigned to him under their rules; for instance, the A.S.E. Rule-book defines the function of the shop-steward as follows:

[District] Committees may also appoint shop-stewards in workshops or departments thereof in their respective districts, such stewards to be under the direction and control of the Committee, by whom their duties shall be defined. The stewards shall be empowered to examine periodically the contribution cards of all members, and to demand that alleged members shall show their contribution cards for examination when starting work. They shall report at least once each quarter on all matters affecting the trade, and keep the Committee posted with all events occurring in the various shops. They shall be paid 4s. for each quarterly report; namely 3s. for duty performed, and 1s. for attendance and report to Committee (conveners of shop-stewards shall receive 6d. extra); these to be payable by the District Committee. Should a shop-steward be discharged through executing his duties he shall be entitled to full wage benefit. If it is necessary for stewards to attend other meetings of the Committee they shall be remunerated the same as witnesses attending committee meetings.

It will be seen from this rule, which is typical, that the shop-steward before the war was merely a minor agent of the Branch or District Committee, by which he was entrusted with the function of seeing that the members in his shop kept their contributions up to date, and that new workers who were taken on in the shop carried a Trade Union card. This minor official bears only the remotest resemblance to the shop-stewards who have won celebrity during the war period. It is true that in some Unions and in some districts the shop-steward, even before the war, had attained to a certain degree of importance, and had been allowed to assume certain functions in negotiating with employers, under the supervision and control of the Branch or District Committee. This was, however, exceptional, and the rapidity with which the new type of shop-steward has developed during the last three years is therefore startling. It is worth while to refer briefly to the history of this development, which has now extended into all the principal engineering centres all over the country, and is already beginning to extend into other industries.

There is no doubt that war-time conditions have been very largely the cause of the rapid growth in the power of the shop-steward. The Munitions Acts, by imposing a new type of discipline upon the worker, and still more a new type of restraint upon the officials and Executives of the various Trade Unions, have played an important part in calling into being an unofficial movement based upon the workshops, through which the men have expressed grievances which could otherwise have found no ready outlet. Secondly, the progress of dilution and the rapid change of workshop customs during the war have imposed upon Trade Unionists the necessity of creating in the workshops an organisation capable of dealing with these questions from day to day as they arise, of making grievances articulate, and of formulating the men's point of view more quickly and more accurately than was possible or necessary under the slow-moving conditions of pre-war industry.

The new movement developed earliest upon the Clyde. Official shop-stewards were appointed at an increasing pace, that is to say, the District Committees of the various Unions nominated increasing numbers of members to act under their authority in the workshops. But side by side with these official developments came an unofficial development. The workers themselves in many shops chose spokesmen without reference to any District Committee, and even without regard to the particular Union to which they belonged. There were thus already in existence two types of shop-stewards, one type ratified by the District Committee, and exercising power under its authority, and the other type chosen directly, without external sanction, by the workers in the shops, and responsible to no one except to those who chose them. The next step was not long in coming. Both official and unofficial shop-stewards in many cases formed themselves into Works Committees, and elected chairmen, secretaries, conveners, etc. These conveners and the other shop-stewards soon felt the need for a wider form of combination, and for contact between one shop and another, and the Clyde strike of February 1915 provided the nucleus of an unofficial organisation which could be used for this purpose. The Strike Committee developed into the Clyde Workers' Committee, and as the shop-stewards' movement on the Clyde grew and extended, the Clyde Workers' Committee developed itself into a central organisation representing unofficially all the various shops in the district. Official as well as unofficial stewards played their part in this development ; but of course in relation to such movements the official stewards could only act in an unofficial capacity.

The Clyde organisation was soon imitated elsewhere. Shop-stewards multiplied all over the country ; Works Committees, Conveners, and the rest sprang up, and in one town after another Workers' Committees or Shop-stewards' Committees on the Clyde model were created, and all the time, whatever the status of the individual stewards, this wider movement remained absolutely unofficial, if not definitely anti-official, and had no relation to the constitutional machinery of the Trade Union movement.

It would be a mistake to regard this movement as universally animated by the idea of any quite new policy. It would be still more a mistake to identify it absolutely with any new social doctrine. These mistakes have, however, been often made, and made the more readily because they possess an element of truth. The men who have principally led the shop-stewards' movement have mostly been working-class theorists, and though their theories have by no means always agreed, there is a certain community of view among the greatest part of them. They are for the most part of the younger generation, " Industrial Unionists " in the sense of desiring the organisation in a single Society of all workers in their industry ; some of them, and these the most active, " Industrial Unionists " in the further sense of desiring the overthrow of Capitalism, and its

replacement by a Society based entirely upon industrial organisations exercising control both over industry and over other common services. Some of them are National Guildsmen, that is to say, they desire the government of industry through self-governing associations of workers without at the same time desiring altogether to abolish the State, or to place the complete government of Society in the hands of bodies rising out of the Trade Unions. Far more of them, no doubt, while they have a more or less clear view of immediate policy, have no such dogmatic theory with regard to the ultimate constitution of Society. There is, however, among all these varying views obviously a considerable measure of agreement. The shop-stewards' movement, wherever it appears, stands for a greater element of control over industry by the workers through their industrial organisations, for a greater element of Trade Union intervention in workshop management, for a bigger say on the part of the rank and file workers in determining the conditions of their working lives.

When, therefore, one of the leaders of the shop-stewards' movement sets out to write down his conception both of the immediate duties and functions of the Shop-stewards' and Workers' Committees, and of their more ultimate destiny and objects, he must not be taken as speaking for a solid and united movement of doctrinaire enthusiasts. This does not mean that his words are not important, or that they are not a highly significant interpretation of strong and growing tendencies in the direction which he indicates. It means only that the theory is still in the making, and, while its general direction is evident, the precise working out of it has still to come. *The Workers' Committee*, by Mr. J. T. Murphy, is a most interesting pamphlet, even if it raises more difficulties than it succeeds in solving. Mr. Murphy sees in the shop-stewards' movement the embryo of a new form of Trade Union organisation, an organisation based upon the works rather than the craft, or even the industry, and far more democratic in character than the old type of Trade Unionism could ever have become. Shop-stewards elected by the workers in the shop, Shop Committees similarly chosen, "plant" Committees embracing representatives of all sections of workers, however diverse, in the same establishment; above these Workers' Committees representing all the various "plants" in a district, above these a national organisation of districts; above these finally, perhaps, an international organisation. These Mr. Murphy conceives as the logical outcome of the shop-stewards' movement; but he does not desire that power and authority should become centralised in the hands of the larger bodies. He does not desire that any elected persons should be able to overthrow or dominate the will of those who elected them. He wants the ultimate decision still to rest in all cases with the rank and file.

It will be seen that this conception may very easily cut right across, not merely the old Craft Unionism, but equally Industrial

Unionism, as it is ordinarily understood. Mr. Murphy thinks primarily of the union, not of all "plants" in an industry into a national Industrial Union, but of all "plants" in a district into a Workers' Committee, to which the industry is only incidental, and one big Union of all the workers the fundamental object. Moreover, Mr. Murphy nowhere defines at all clearly his attitude towards the existing Trade Unions. He repudiates the suggestion that he is out against them or seeks their catastrophic overthrow. Yet it is hard to see how the organisation which he outlines is consistent with present-day Trade Unionism, or could conceivably be developed out of it except by catastrophic methods. The line of division between Mr. Murphy and the comparatively few professed Union-smashers of the extreme "Industrial Workers of the World" school is indeed at times perilously narrow.

It is interesting to place in relation to these theories of the principal spokesman of the shop-stewards' movement the actual steps that have been taken by the officials of some of the Unions principally concerned with a view to constitutionalising the shop-stewards. In December 1917 a serious dispute broke out in Coventry owing to the refusal of a particular firm to recognise the shop-stewards chosen by its employees. This dispute resulted in a local strike, which soon threatened to become national in character. The employers and Trade Unions thereupon took action, and a national conference was held between the Engineering Employers' Federation and the Engineering Trade Unions. At this conference national recognition of the shop-stewards was discussed, and an agreement was actually drawn up and signed by a number of the Unions, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, however, refusing to accept the terms offered. This agreement, which has since been ratified by the votes of the members of the Unions which accepted it, provided for the recognition of individual shop-stewards, and for their participation in the first stages of negotiation on questions arising in the workshops. It did not, however, provide in any way for the recognition of Works Committees or for joint action between the various shop-stewards belonging to the different Unions; and it is believed that it was on this point that the negotiations with the Amalgamated Society of Engineers broke down.

Clearly, before the shop-stewards' movement can be harmonised with the official machinery of Trade Unionism, it is necessary, not simply that individual stewards should secure recognition, but also that the combination of all the various stewards in a works representing the various trades and various degrees of skill should receive similar recognition. It is not clear whether even this will satisfy the shop-stewards' movement, since the shop-stewards' leaders go further and desire common action, not merely within a works, but between the various works in a district. This, however, seems to be a matter of internal Trade Union organisation, and it is quite conceivable that, having won recognition of shop-stewards within the

works, the shop-stewards will go further and find some means of getting control also of the district organisation of their respective Trade Unions. It is worth noting that a temporary solution of this problem has already been found in certain districts, especially in Coventry. In Coventry the shop-stewards are already official, but at the same time no shop-steward is appointed by a particular Union. All shop-stewards hold their credentials from the Joint Engineering Trades Committee representing the various Unions, and in this way at least a temporary solution of the whole problem has been found, and the official and rank and file elements have been largely reconciled in this particular locality.

To speak of the future of the shop-stewards' movement in general terms would be to go beyond the province of this merely descriptive summary. It is, however, worth mentioning that although the shop-stewards' movement has only become permanent so far in the engineering industry, it is already showing signs of extension elsewhere, notably in the boot and shoe and textile industries, and in certain wood-working trades. There are some who hold that it is largely a mushroom growth created by the war conditions, and destined to disappear when normal times return. There are others who believe that it is in embryo a new form of Trade Union organisation which is destined, whether by constitutional means or not, largely to revolutionise the past methods of Trade Union action. Some hold a less sensational view midway between these two.

SECTION 3.—INTER-UNION RELATIONS

(a) *Demarcation*.—There is no problem that has caused a greater amount of heart-burning inside the Trade Union movement than that of demarcation between the various trades. For many years opinions have been widely expressed throughout the Trade Union movement that the continued existence of these problems is an absurdity and often a scandal, and yet it has so far proved impossible, not merely to remove it, but even to find any satisfactory method of dealing with disputes as they arise.

The general character of the problem is simple; each trade desires to have clearly marked out the type of work which it, and the other trades which are akin to it, are entitled to do; but each has usually a somewhat extensive conception of the class of work to which it is itself entitled. In the case of long-established processes custom may often settle the question in the long run, but new processes are continually being introduced, and changes in the method of manufacture of course make such changes inevitable. Whenever such a change takes place in connection with an organised group of trades it is almost inevitable that disputes should arise as to which of the trades is entitled to do the new work or use the new tool. Each trade fears that, if it loses control of a particular class of work or of a particular tool, its trade will be taken

from it, and its members will walk the streets unemployed. Nor is this the only feeling. There is also a strong feeling of craftsmanship behind the objection to being ruled out of any class of work which a man feels that his training enables him to do efficiently. The fear of unemployment, however, if it is not the sole source of demarcation disputes, is no doubt their most serious cause, and while the problem of unemployment remains unsolved it is doubtful whether demarcation difficulties can really be got under control. Amalgamation, it is often urged, will do something towards this, but it is unlikely that amalgamation will go far enough to remove the difficulty altogether, or even that it would do so however far it went. It is obvious that it is often very difficult from the very nature of the work to define accurately the line of demarcation between crafts of a similar character. This would be so even if industry were purely static, for frequently one craft must co-operate with another in doing a single job, and there may be parts of the job which can be equally well done by either craft, but to which each craft is tempted to put forward an exclusive claim. Thus, in shipbuilding, the line between the shipwright and the joiner, or the shipwright and the upholsterer, or the shipwright and the boiler-maker is by no means clear in numbers of marginal cases, and this is true even apart from changes in shipbuilding methods, although such changes very greatly aggravate the problem.

Demarcation difficulties arising from changes in industrial practice can be easily illustrated by two particular examples. The coming of electricity has profoundly revolutionised many engineering processes. The electrical branch of industry is still growing and rapidly changing, and demarcation disputes between engineering fitters and electricians are continually arising. The second case is that of acetylene welding, where the welding tool introduced in recent years is claimed in various shops by boilermakers, copper-smiths, sheet-metal workers, fitters, drillers, semi-skilled workers, and by several other classes of labour. Or, if we move outside the engineering industry to the other most fruitful field of demarcation disputes, we find that, in the building industry, bricklayers and masons are continually disputing over work in which brick and stone meet; while on constructional work fitters and plumbers, and plumbers and heating engineers wage ceaseless warfare.

One or two brief but detailed instances of disputes will serve better than anything else to reveal the character of the problem.

Recent changes in shipbuilding practice have included a largely increased use of corticine for the surface of decks. The upholsterers claim that corticine is only a specially thick linoleum, and therefore belongs to them, while the shipwrights, in the words of their General Secretary, claim that it is "almost a deck." Or take a second case. For years plumbers and fitters on the north-east coast disputed concerning the fitting of certain classes of pipes. At last an award was secured; plumbers were to fit all pipes of less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and

fitters all pipes of more than 2½ inches. Two-and-a-half-inch pipes were unfortunately forgotten, and the dispute raged with undiminished violence for years afterwards. In another case, a long-standing dispute between plumbers and fitters was finally settled by the quite arbitrary decision that the same class of work should be done by the one trade on warships and by the other on merchant ships.

Lest we should seem by actual instances to turn the whole question of demarcation into ridicule, it must be stated that there is often an element of solid reason behind what seem the most absurd disputes. A process of nibbling at one trade by another does sometimes in fact result in throwing the members of the first trade out of work. Naturally their organisation must endeavour to protect them from such a danger. Clearly, then, as long as the unemployment problem exists, nothing can possibly be effective in the last resort in solving the problem of demarcation, however much closer union between the various industries and crafts may help towards the better adjustment of difficulties as they arise.

The problem is considerably aggravated by the fact that the different trades which dispute over certain classes of work have often different rates of pay, so that there is an advantage for the employer in giving the work to the lower-paid trade. To meet this it has often been suggested that, where work is in dispute, it should be open to members of either trade at the higher rate, but it has so far proved impracticable to adopt this principle generally, although it has been acted upon in certain cases. In any event, the settlement of difficulties relating to rates of pay does nothing to lessen the far more important cause of demarcation disputes—the fear of unemployment.

We must turn now to the methods adopted by the Trade Unions in dealing with the problem of demarcation. In both the ship-building and building industries there are special demarcation agreements covering a considerable proportion of the trades concerned. The principle of these agreements, unfortunately, virtually makes the employer the arbitrator. In a shipbuilding agreement, for instance, it is provided that where two trades are disputing over a particular class of work, the two trades shall each send representatives to a Demarcation Court, and the employer shall send a similar number of representatives. As each trade naturally votes in favour of itself this means in practice that the employers arbitrate. It does not always mean that the employer gives the work to the lower-paid grade of labour, since there are other things which he will take into account. He may, for instance, think there is more chance of peace and quietness if he gives it to the higher-paid class of worker, and this in such cases has sometimes occurred. The position, however, is exceedingly unsatisfactory, and certain Unions which are vitally concerned have refused to be parties to demarcation agreements in which the employers enter virtually as arbitrators.

Another method of dealing with the problem is for the Trade Unions to thrash the matter out among themselves. The Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades Federation, for instance, has throughout the whole period of its existence been very largely concerned with the question of demarcation. When two of the trades connected with it are in dispute the Federation appoints a small Board of representatives not including any representatives of either of the trades affected. This Court then issues its finding, which is supposed to bind the trades concerned, although in practice such awards are somewhat difficult to enforce. This method is obviously preferable on general grounds, although the difficulty, first, of finding a really impartial tribunal and secondly, of enforcement, makes it in some cases less satisfactory because a just and binding decision is often not secured. Under either method the problem is usually dealt with solely with reference to specific cases which have arisen in practice, and the solutions arrived at may, and often do, vary from district to district. In a number of cases definite Apportionment Lists have resulted from a series of decisions, and these lists are issued in printed form for the information of the trades in the particular districts to which they apply. Where questions of interpreting such lists arise out of changes in processes they are generally dealt with as they arise. This method, however, has not yet been very widely extended, and it obviously presupposes in most cases a considerable amount of detailed work in advance by way of decisions on particular disputes.

(b) *Skilled and Less-skilled*.—Closely akin to the problem of demarcation is that of the relations between skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled workers, so far as it is concerned with the types of work they are respectively entitled to undertake. The Trade Unions, however, do not recognise differences between skilled and less-skilled workers as demarcation disputes, and do not recognise the right of the unskilled workers to raise such cases against skilled Unions. In fact, the skilled Unions virtually claim the right to do such work as they think fit, and, so far as they can enforce their claim, to exclude the less-skilled where they think fit. This problem is principally of importance in the engineering industry, where the rapid development of machine processes has led to a growing encroachment by less-skilled workers on jobs which were previously regarded as the province of the skilled tradesman. Occasionally, however, differences arise in most other industries as well, although in less acute forms. There is at present absolutely no method of adjustment of disputes of this character as between the various Unions involved, and this is likely to prove a serious difficulty during the period of resettlement after the war, especially in view of the changed conditions which have resulted from "dilution"—that is to say, from the introduction of less-skilled labour on work hitherto done by labour of a higher class. Such dilution usually takes the form, not so much of the direct substitution of one worker

for another on an identical operation, as of the introduction of simpler, of more specialised machinery operated by a less-skilled type of workers. It is thus only a continuation in an intensified form of the long-standing "Machine Question."

"The Machine Question," as it is often called, has perplexed the engineering industry and taxed the brains of engineering Trade Unionists ever since the Unions have been in existence. With the years it has only grown increasingly serious, and now it has reached the stage at which some form of agreement defining the relative spheres of the various grades of workers, and the methods of deciding upon the classes of work which are within the provinces of the various grades, is probably the most urgent problem which the industry has to face. The problem would largely disappear if the suggestion which is made in some quarters that all machines should be thrown open to all workers at standard rates were really practicable, but there is no sign at all that the skilled Trade Unions are prepared to accept or to consider any such solution of the question. The most hopeful course for the moment seems to be some agreed system of rating the various machines, so that any worker operating a particular machine is entitled at least to the minimum rate laid down for the class of machine concerned. Such an agreement would probably enable all classes of machines, except the highest, to be thrown open to all workers at a standard rate, while still reserving the highest classes of machines to be operated wholly by skilled labour. It would also serve as a basis for regulating the rates to be paid to women machine-operators as well as less-skilled men.

SECTION 4.—STANDARD RATES AND "PAYMENT BY RESULTS"

Wherever Trade Unionism achieves any strength or measure of recognition we find it endeavouring to enforce by means of collective bargaining some sort of standard rates or methods of remuneration for its members. In most trades of a skilled character the Trade Unions enforce, at least locally, standard time rates of wages, at less than which no member of the Union is allowed to work in the district concerned. In Unions covering several distinct classes of labour there may be of course distinct standard rates fixed for various classes of the membership, as when, in some districts, different day rates are fixed by the Amalgamated Society of Engineers for patternmakers, turners, fitters, machinists, etc. The principle, however, is in all cases the same—that of securing a standard rate of remuneration which is regarded as a minimum by all the members of the Union in the district. These standard rates are not in any sense maxima, and in many industries, especially those that work mainly on a time-work system, large proportions of the membership may be in receipt of wages in excess of the standard rate laid down by the Union. They are, in fact, minima which may apply to a greater or less proportion of the members of

the trade. Where an industry is conducted successfully under time-work conditions, that is, where the worker is paid simply so much per hour, or per week, or per month, the standard time-rate is the main item in wage bargaining between employers and Trade Unions. It may, however, have certain complications of its own. Thus, instead of fixing a flat minimum rate for all members of a particular trade, the Unions may elect to fix incremental scales ranging upwards from an agreed minimum, and varying either with the quality or nature of the work done, or with the years of service or the qualifications of the worker concerned. Incremental scales, as opposed to flat rates, exist principally in occupations in which employment is of a largely continuous character, *i.e.* principally among clerks and in the Government, Local Government, and Railway services. They are, in any case, not essentially different from standard rates of the ordinary type, since in every case the object of the Trade Union is to fix a minimum standard rate below which no member of the craft is allowed to work where the Union is strong.

The problem of wages is far more complicated in those industries which adopt, in whole or in part, a system of "payment by results," that is to say, industries in which the worker is paid, not so much per hour or per day or per week, but so much per unit of production, or at any rate some sum dependent in one way or another upon the amount produced. Very seldom are systems of payment by results entirely disconnected from time-work; for the Unions usually demand that, even where the worker is paid on a piece-work or bonus system, a standard day wage shall still be guaranteed in all cases, irrespective of output. This insistence on the day rate is of greater or less importance according to the character of the occupation. Where the conditions of the trade are such that a given amount of effort can be relied upon under normal conditions to produce a given output, it is not so necessary for the Union to insist upon a guaranteed day wage, because if piece-work prices are fixed at a reasonable level a reasonable day wage follows almost as a matter of course. Thus, in the textile industries, wage negotiations centre almost entirely round piece-work prices, and advances or reductions are calculated by way of a percentage on or off the piece-work prices. The same conditions apply in certain other trades, notably in some branches of the iron and steel trades, and of shipbuilding.

Apart from the special complication of the "abnormal place"¹ the mining industry belongs to the same group. These conditions, however, do not prevail in all industries, and there are many cases in which a system of payment by results is adopted although there

¹ The "abnormal place" is a position in which, owing to difficulties presented by the conformation of the coal seam, the coal-hewer is not able, in a given time, to extract the amount of coal necessary in order to secure the average, or something like the average, piece-work earnings.

is no sufficient assurance that a given amount of effort will regularly result in a given output. This is particularly the case in the engineering and kindred trades, and the greatest pains have been taken by the Trade Unions, where payment by results has been accepted, to secure a full guarantee that day-work rates will be maintained irrespective of output, or piece-work earnings. This is secured by permitting the introduction of any system of payment by results only on condition that the employer guarantees in advance the day-work rate to all piece-workers, whether their output is above or below what is regarded as the standard quantity. The Trade Unions in organised trades are able as a rule to make this point good, and the guaranteed day rate has been incorporated in the various agreements dealing with piece-work and bonus systems in the engineering industry. In trades which are less well organised this has not been secured, even where the conditions of a trade make it exceedingly important. Thus, in some of the occupations covered by the Transport Workers' Federation, as well as in the boot and shoe industry, and in other important trades, piece-work systems are in operation without any guarantee of day rates to the piece-worker.

The policy of the Trade Unions in different trades in relation to payment by results varies very widely indeed. Broadly speaking, we may say that piece-work is generally either welcomed or accepted with equanimity where an increase of effort normally results in a uniform increase in output, whereas it is usually rejected or makes its way only with considerable difficulty in trades to which these conditions do not apply. This is exactly what might be expected by any observer of British industrial conditions, since it is clear that where output in normal cases closely corresponds to effort, it is usually possible to adjust piece-work prices with almost as great ease and accuracy as it is possible to lay down the day-work rate of wages, or a series of day-work rates.

The storm-centre of the battle which has raged between employers and employed on the question of payment by results has been throughout the engineering industry. In engineering before the war the great bulk of the work was of a non-repetitive character, and exceedingly difficult to measure in terms of output alone. The employers, however, were exceedingly desirous in many cases of securing the widest possible extension of payment by results as a means of stimulating hard work and a sense of obligation to the firm, and this anxiety has manifestly increased during the war period. The Trade Unions, on the other hand, have usually opposed, or accepted only with extreme reluctance, any extension of payment by results in connection with which they have not been able to foresee quite clearly the exact results upon the wages and conditions of their members.

The case put forward in favour of payment by results as against time work is twofold. It is urged, in the first place, that under a

system of payment by results the workman is rewarded in accordance with the energy, efficiency, and initiative which he puts into his work, and that thereby production is stimulated, machines and other plant utilised to the fullest possible extent, cost of production lowered, and the consumer benefited in the form of lower prices, the employer in the form of higher profits, and the workman in higher earnings: at the same time it is suggested that payment by results is in itself a juster system, since it secures more nearly to each man the rewards of his own labour, and does not, like time-work, mean the granting of the same reward to efficient and inefficient alike. In reply to this argument those Trade Unions which oppose or regard with suspicion attempts to introduce payment by results usually retort in the first place that most of the systems actually suggested involve a gain to the employer at the expense of the worker, with the result that an increasing output under the wage system may well mean unemployment for some of their members, and that even if higher wages are given at first, as soon as the employer has discovered the highest output of which his workers are capable prices are cut, so that the remuneration to the worker returns almost, if not quite, to the previous level. Moreover, it is urged that many systems of payment by results are bad for Trade Union action, because they result, not in that collective solidarity which inspires the workers who are out for a common standard rate, but in the setting of one man against another, and in forgetfulness of the loyalty which is owed to the Trade Union. The case on both sides of the argument is, no doubt, to some extent fallacious, and includes arguments which could not be finally sustained. There is, however, much to be said for the workman's case, at any rate as against the prevailing systems of payment by results, just as there is undoubtedly a considerable element of truth in the employer's case if the only thing to consider is that of stimulating profits and lowering the labour cost of production. We shall be better able to see the arguments in their proper perspective as we look rather more closely at the various methods of payment adopted.

The simplest method is straight piece-work, that is, the system under which the worker is paid so much for every unit produced, whether it be payment per ton or per article or per dozen or per hundred of output. This system prevails over a wide range of industry. The coal hewer is paid so much per ton hewed, the coal trimmer so much per ton trimmed, the cotton weaver so much per yard woven, the smelter so much per ton produced. Under this system the labour cost of the article to the employer remains constant, and any increase in the output of the workers means a corresponding increase in wages. At the same time the employer saves by securing a higher output, because overhead charges are reduced and machines more fully utilised. A piece-work system clearly may be good or bad from the workman's point of view very largely according to the methods by which piece-work prices are fixed. If the employer

is able to fix piece-work prices arbitrarily at his own valuation, and to vary them thereafter, it will clearly mean that the wages of the operative remain absolutely under his control, except in so far as the Trade Unions successfully insist on a payment of a guaranteed time-rate, irrespective of output. The adoption of the piece-work system, therefore, so far from making collective bargaining by the Trade Union unnecessary, leaves the need for it altogether unaltered, and merely results in making conditions of bargaining more complicated, and thereby in laying greater responsibility upon the Union for the maintenance of fair conditions.

It is not surprising to find that piece-work is most universally in operation and is working most smoothly in those industries in which the work is capable of being measured in terms of a simple unit of production, and in which processes are fairly uniform. In these cases the workers often work under price lists agreed upon between the Trade Unions and Employers' Associations, and little scope, apart from such questions as "bad material," is left for bargaining with regard to individual piece-work prices. This is usually possible in the textile, and in the main in the iron and steel industry, and in other cases. Where the unit of output is not so easily measurable systems of payment by results are often found, as in engineering; but in these cases it has been necessary for the Unions to adopt more elaborate measures for the regulation of piece-work prices, or, where they have not done so, they have found the system to be liable to very grave abuses by employers.

Piece-work is undoubtedly the most widely prevalent of the various systems of payment by results, although it is not the system which has attracted the greatest attention in this country in recent years. Where Trade Union conditions compel the employer to agree to reasonable piece-work prices he is often dissatisfied with the system because there is no reduction in the labour cost of the article in addition to the reduction in overhead charges secured by greater output. To meet this point several systems have been devised, under which, while the workman's earnings increase with any increase in output, the employer also receives a share in the results of this output, not merely by saving on his overhead charges, but also by paying a lower price to the worker for each unit of output. The most notable example of a system of payment by results based upon this idea is the Premium Bonus System. This system has two main forms, and a very much larger number of subordinate varieties. Under it, instead of a piece-work price being fixed for each job, a standard time is fixed in which each job is to be completed. The workman is guaranteed his time-rate; and if he does the job in less than the standard time he receives payment at time-rates for the time taken, *plus* a premium on any time saved out of the standard time allowed. Under one variety of the system the worker is paid for one-half (or some other fraction) of the time saved out of the standard time allowed, the firm reaping the benefit

of the remaining fraction of the time saved (Halsey System, Weir System, etc.). Under another the employee is paid a bonus of 10 per cent for every 10 per cent saved out of the time allowed (Rowan System). It will be seen that under the former of these systems earnings are theoretically unlimited, whereas under the second system, however much the man may produce, he cannot possibly earn twice his time-rate, because he cannot conceivably save 100 per cent of the time allowed.

In addition to the Premium Bonus System there are numerous other systems of payment by results of a more or less "fancy" character. Many of these have been imported from America, and are closely connected with the doctrine of scientific management. They mostly aim at securing a lower labour cost for each article produced, and at the same time an increase in hourly earnings to the worker in return for his increased production. The increase in earnings is not, however, under these systems equivalent to the increase in output. Into these systems it is not possible to enter in the present summary.¹

A further important fact in connection with payment by results is the distinction between individual and collective payment under these various systems. In some cases payment by results is worked on a purely individual basis, each individual worker being paid in proportion to his or her individual output. In others the system adopted is collective, and a bonus is paid on the total output of a shop or group of workers without reference to the output of any particular individual. Trade Unions in many cases strongly advocate the adoption of a collective system wherever this is made possible by the conditions of the trade concerned.

Under any system of payment by results everything depends in the last resort upon the level at which prices or standard times are fixed. In many cases the employers have claimed and still claim the right to fix and adjust prices and times without reference to or consultation with the workmen directly concerned, or their Trade Unions. In others the Trade Unions have been able to enforce more or less complete systems of collective bargaining with regard to payment by results.

In some cases, Trade Unions insist on preliminary price lists applying over the whole country or a whole district, and covering a wide range of different operations. In other cases, where there is no standard list applicable to the Union or district as a whole, shop lists have been devised, or at any rate there are regular methods in a particular establishment of both fixing and adjusting prices and times whenever a new job is introduced, or an old job recast.

The perennial complaint of Trade Unionists with regard to the operation of payment by results is that the employer "cuts prices."

¹ For a study of them the reader is referred to my book published by the Fabian Research Department under the title of *The Payment of Wages*.

This complaint is not heard, or is not heard so much, where established price lists exist, but wherever the system of collective bargaining is defective, or the wide variety and non-repetitive character of the operations performed make collective bargaining difficult or complicated, disputes on this point are continually arising.

Employers of the more sagacious type often point out that it is bad policy to cut prices, and guarantees have been introduced into many agreements with regard to piece-work that prices will only be reduced when the method of manufacture of the article concerned is altered. It is, however, exceedingly difficult to make these guarantees effective, and the complaints, so far from ceasing, continually increase in volume. In some of the better-managed shops, and in some shops in which prices are fixed with considerable scientific accuracy, price-cutting has been reduced within comparatively small dimensions; in others, and especially wherever the method of fixing prices is unscientific, price-cutting flourishes exceedingly. Indeed, one of the arguments put forward by employers in favour of the Rowan Premium Bonus System is that, by rigidly limiting earnings in any case to less than double time it makes it unnecessary for the employer to cut prices, however unscientific his method of fixing them may be. Such a method of making the workmen pay for the employers' inefficiency hardly requires comment.

It will have been seen, from what has been said above, that the reception accorded to payment by results by Trade Unions in the group of industries round which controversy has principally raged is easily explicable. Payment by results may satisfy a Trade Union, where (1) the nature of the operations performed is such that effort is easily measured in terms of output, and (2) where a full and complete system of collective bargaining exists. Where either of these conditions is wanting payment by results will usually be applied, if at all, only in the teeth of Trade Union opposition, although when it has once been introduced, if prices and times are fixed on a liberal scale, Trade Unionists who have strongly opposed its introduction may subsequently be unwilling to face the substantial reduction in earnings which would be involved in a return to day-work conditions.

There are obviously certain industries, including notably the greater part of the industries of transport and distribution, which are totally unsuited to payment by results; and there are others in which the opposition to them has so far been largely successful, notably the building industry, in which climatic conditions and the state of the materials used conspire to make adequate measurement of effort in relation to output exceedingly difficult. In other industries payment by results continues to make headway in the face of opposition, but there is no sign that the Trade Unions which have so far opposed it are prepared to withdraw their antagonism. There are even signs in certain industries in which piece-work has been long established—notably mining—of a desire among a considerable section of the workers to return to day-work conditions,

and to demand enhanced day-work rates as a substitute for piece-work earnings.

SECTION 5.—WOMEN IN TRADE UNIONS

We have already noted in the first part of this draft the great increase in the female membership in the Trade Union Movement. There are now over half a million women in Trade Unions, and the number is still increasing. Some of this increase is, of course, due to the abnormal conditions created by the war, and some of it may not be permanent. It is, however, significant that so much progress has been made in organisation during the war period, and this seems to point to the fact that many of the difficulties which have always been supposed to stand in the way of effective Trade Union organisation among women are really less serious than has been imagined.

Naturally, the female membership of Trade Unions is concentrated largely in certain groups. By far the largest single group is still that in the cotton industry, where women have long been employed in numbers considerably exceeding those of the men. Other industries in which women were organised to a considerable extent before 1914 included all the other textile industries, the boot and shoe industry, the clothing trades, printing and paper working, and distribution. In all these occupations, except the cotton industry, women were very much less strongly organised than men, and the number unorganised considerably exceeded the number in Trade Unions. The total female membership of Trade Unions in 1913 amounted to 356,000, of whom 211,000 were in the cotton industry, and 46,000 in the other textile industries; the next largest figures being 24,000 shop assistants, and 23,000 in the general labour group.

By far the largest increase during the war is in the general labour group. It is unfortunately not possible to give details of this increase, as general labour Unions seldom separate their male and female membership. It is, however, known that the National Federation of Women Workers has increased its membership from about 20,000 to about 50,000; while the Workers' Union, which had before the war a comparatively small female membership, has now also about 50,000; and the other general labour Unions have increased in something like the same proportion.

The difficulties of organising women in Trade Unions have often been pointed out. Women, as a rule, do not enter industry with a view to remaining in it permanently. Sooner or later the majority of them marry, and cease to be employed for wages. They tend, therefore, to regard the conditions under which they work with a less critical eye than the men who are likely to spend the whole of their lives in industry. This makes them more difficult to organise, because it makes them take less interest in attempts to improve their industrial position. Their eyes are fixed less on the

factory, and more on things outside the factory. It is, however, easily possible to exaggerate this difficulty, and it is probable that its dimensions have been greatly exaggerated in the past. A greater obstacle to the organisation of women is that presented by the exceedingly low rates of pay which have always prevailed for women workers. It is probably more to the increase in women's wages than to any other cause that the rapid growth of Trade Unionism among women during the war is due.

The incursion of women into industries and trades hitherto closed to them is too large a subject to be dealt with in this short book. Here we can only mention that the substitution of women for men has taken place over a wide range of occupations. A few of the most significant instances may, however, be barely mentioned. In the railway service, both in clerical and in the operative branches, on trams and buses, in metal, chemical and other classes of munition factories, in aircraft factories, in banks and insurance companies, and in many other occupations women have taken up work which was hitherto closed to them. Moreover, the employment of women has been extended in those occupations which were open to them in some measure before the war—in agriculture, in the smaller metal, and in the wood-working trades, and in shops and offices.

The rates of pay secured in these new occupations have varied very widely from case to case; and only in a comparatively small number of cases have the women secured really equal rates with the men. This is the case on trams and buses in London and some other centres, whereas in other districts lower rates are being paid to women substitutes. On the railways women receive the minimum rates of the grades in which they are employed, but have not received the full advances granted to the men during the war. In the munitions trades women on skilled work are supposed to receive skilled rates; but here again, advances given during the war have not been fully conceded; while women on semi-skilled and unskilled work receive considerably lower rates than men on similar jobs. In the distributive trades equality has sometimes been secured in the Co-operative movement, but almost everywhere in private employment women's rates are lower than men's. In offices women are almost always paid considerably less than men. These rates, however, while they do not realise the principle of equal pay for equality of work, are a considerable advance on the rates which were actually being paid to women before the war. They have, moreover, had the effect of stirring up among women an interest in Trade Union membership, and of making them far more likely to become, and to remain, good Trade Unionists, even when the present artificial conditions cease to exist.

It has often been complained that the men's Trade Unions have adopted towards women an exclusive policy. This attitude has indeed been maintained in many cases, and women are not admitted

into any of the Craft Unions in the engineering, shipbuilding, or building industries. The Transport Unions, on the other hand, including the National Union of Railwaymen and the Tramway Workers' Unions, have adopted the policy of organising women, and endeavouring to secure for them full rates. Where the skilled Unions have not admitted women the general labour Unions and the National Federation of Women Workers have naturally reaped their largest harvest, in some cases working in agreement with the skilled Unions, in a few cases almost in open opposition.

It was frequently pointed out before the war that even in those Unions which had a strong female membership, women, as a rule, played an insignificant part in Trade Union administration. Indeed, wherever no special provision was made for the representation of women in mixed Unions, the tendency was for the management to fall almost entirely into the hands of the men. In the Weavers' Amalgamation, for instance, there are 130,000 women members out of a total membership of considerably less than 200,000; yet all the officials and all the members of the Executive Council of the Amalgamation are men, although there is a minority of women on many of the local Committees. What is true of the Weavers is true of most of the mixed Unions, and there are hardly any cases in which a mixed Union has elected a woman to an office open to both sexes. The only exception in a large Union seems to be in the case of the Dundee Mill and Factory Operatives, where the secretary is a woman. Here, however, the women workers are in a vast numerical majority.

This failure of women to take an adequate part in the management of mixed Unions has led a number of Societies to provide special methods of representation for women. For instance, the United Garment Workers and the Shop Assistants both have special Women's Councils of an advisory character. The General Union of Textile Workers, Boot and Shoe Operatives, Garment Workers, Paper Workers, Co-operative and Commercial Employees, and Postal and Telegraph Clerks all have special women organisers; while the Garment Workers, Shop Assistants, Dockers, Paper Workers, Boot and Shoe Operatives, and other Unions maintain separate women's branches in certain cases. Women have seats on the Executive Councils of the Paper Workers, Postal and Telegraph Clerks, Shop Assistants, Boot and Shoe Operatives, Dundee Jute and Flax Workers, General Union of Textile Workers, and other Unions; but despite all this provision for sex representation the part played by women in framing the policy of the Trade Union Movement is still exceedingly small. In one respect the war has produced a considerable change, for the calling up of men for the army has, in many cases, forced upon "mixed" Unions a large number of women as branch secretaries and local officials, and on the whole the experiments made in this direction seem to have been extremely satisfactory.

The largest separate Women's Society is the National Federa-

tion of Women Workers. This body works in close alliance with the Women's Trade Union League, a federal propagandist body to which many of the mixed Unions are affiliated. The policy of both the League and the Federation is to get women into mixed Unions wherever such Unions exist, and the Federation acts rather as a clearing-house, and as an organisation for women workers for whom no special provision exists, than as a general association for all women workers. The management of the Federation is almost entirely in the hands of women, and its general secretary, Miss Mary Macarthur, is generally recognised as the leader of Trade Unionism among women. Apart from the Federation the number of important Unions catering for women alone is small. There is an independent Union of Women Boot and Shoe Workers of some importance at Leicester; while in some of the smaller textile industries women are organised in separate Unions which are closely federated to the men's Societies. There are small separate women's Unions also in the bookbinding trades, and among civil servants and other clerks; while an exceedingly interesting small Society has sprung into being during the war among women engaged in a comparatively new skilled occupation, that of welding. The Society of Women Welders, small as it is, is a well-organised Craft Union of women possessing a considerable amount of skill, and during the war this Society has shown itself exceptionally efficient and enterprising.

SECTION 6.—RELATIONS TO SUPERVISORS AND PROFESSIONALS

Mrs. Webb in her report upon Professional Associations, published as a Supplement to the *New Statesman* in 1917, mentioned in passing the fact that it is impossible to draw any hard-and-fast line between Trade Unions and Associations of Professionals, since there is in fact a continuous gradation from Professional Associations bearing no resemblance at all to Trade Unions, to pure Trade Union bodies bearing no resemblance at all to Associations of Professionals. In this section we are concerned with certain organisations of an intermediate type, and more particularly with Associations formed by persons whose function it is to supervise the rank and file workmen, and to act as go-betweens between them and the management. These foremen, deputies, superintendents, and the like are naturally for the most part promoted from the ranks of the manual wage-earners, and on promotion they have in the past usually left the ranks of the Trade Union Movement, and come to regard themselves definitely as the servants of the employers, having no further concern with working-class movements. It is true that throughout the history of Trade Unionism a certain number of such promoted workmen have retained their connection with their Trade Unions in a more or less private manner, by being attached to Central Office Branches, and by other similar devices; but even where this has been the case they have upon promotion usually lost all share in the

active government of their Societies, however prominent they may have been before their promotion.

During the last few years the movement towards organisation amongst these classes of workers has been particularly marked. The various supervisory grades have set out in some cases to organise themselves in Associations of their own, and in one or two cases they have even thrown in their lot with the rank and file workers by coming in and playing an active part in the ordinary Trade Union Movement. The position can best be made clear by taking a few specific instances.

(1) In the mines the deputy occupies a position largely corresponding to that of a foreman in a factory. In most of the districts of the Miners' Federation deputies are eligible for membership in the Miners' Association, and in some districts a large proportion of the deputies are actually enrolled in the Miners' Associations. In nearly all districts, however, there exist separate Deputies' Associations in which the majority of the deputies are organised independently both of the management and of the men. In a few Midland districts there also exist Associations patronised by the employers in which deputies and under-managers are combined in a single Association.

The relations between the various Deputies' Associations and the Miners' Associations vary widely from one district to another. In one or two cases the deputies are actually federated with the local Miners' Association, while in others the two are definitely hostile, and no working arrangement seems likely or possible. There is, however, no doubt that organisation among deputies is growing, and that there is an increasing feeling in certain districts that it is important for the miners to pay more attention than hitherto to keeping control over those of their members who are promoted to such positions.

(2) On the railways a rather different situation exists. The Railway Clerks' Association, as we have mentioned in a previous section of this book, has achieved very considerable success in organising the supervisory grades, including station-masters, agents, and chief clerks. The National Union of Railwaymen, on the other hand, has so far concentrated nearly all its attention on the operative grades, and has organised only a few thousands of supervisory workers. The success of the Railway Clerks' Association shows that there is no insurmountable obstacle to the organisation of these workers in a body which is quite definitely a Trade Union, pursuing a distinctly Labour policy, although there may be difficulty in organising them in an Industrial Union along with workers drawn from all sections, skilled and unskilled alike.

(3) In the Post Office and Civil Service, the lower-paid grades of supervisory workers are already for the most part organised, having followed the example of the rank and file by forming Associations of their own. In some cases their relations with the rank and file are

fairly cordial in character. For instance, the Civil Service Clerical Alliance includes bodies which may be regarded as belonging to both categories, while the new Federation of Post Office Unions is also a combination of supervisory and rank and file Associations. A comparatively new body, "The Society of Civil Servants," is now making very considerable headway among grades of Civil Servants who have hitherto been regarded as outside the range of effective combination. It caters chiefly for Civil Servants whose minimum or maximum is between £200 and £500 a year. The National Association of Local Government Officers, which is hardly a Trade Union, need not be mentioned in this connection, although so far as its membership goes it is largely of the same type.

(4) Teachers form in some respects a class of workers closely analogous to Civil Servants. The National Union of Teachers, with its 100,000 members, the Assistant Masters' Association, and the numerous other Societies of men and women teachers tend to resemble Trade Unions to a very considerable extent. Branches of the National Union of Teachers have long been affiliated to Trades Councils and Local Labour Parties in a number of districts, and a vigorous movement exists inside the various Associations for the advocacy of union with the Labour Movement. The Teachers' Labour League is the propagandist organisation which serves to co-ordinate this activity. At the present time, the National Union of Teachers, on the instruction of its Conference, has under consideration the question of affiliation to the Labour Party. Whether or not this proposal secures endorsement, the N.U.T. must be regarded as being in effect a Trade Union. By peculiar methods necessitated by its members' terms of service, it has called strikes, and its main preoccupation is with the maintenance and improvement of the position and status of a class of workers as much exploited as any in the community.¹

(5) In the engineering industry many foremen have long retained their membership of the Unions catering for the craft from which they have been promoted to foremanship. In many cases they have done this secretly by attaching themselves to the Central Office Branch of their Trade Union, and in very few cases have they continued to play any part in the government of their Society. Meanwhile the employers have used every endeavour to prevent any development of Trade Unions among foremen, and wherever possible have induced their foremen to join a body called the Foremen's Mutual Association,² which is governed jointly by the employers and the foremen themselves, each employer having one vote for every foreman who is insured. This Society is certainly in no sense

¹ For full details of the organisation of teachers, see *English Teachers and their Professional Associations*, by Beatrice Webb (*New Statesman Supplement* Parts. Price 1s. each).

² Other organisations of a similar type exist in other industries, e.g. the Colliery Officials' Mutual Benefit Association.

a Trade Union, and its rules explicitly prevent it from taking any form of collective action in regard to conditions of employment. It is a pure Benefit Society, designed to prevent Trade Unionism. Despite its existence, there have been several attempts recently to promote a national organisation of foremen free from dependence on the employers, and such a national organisation is now being brought into existence, and is reported to be securing a considerable number of members, and even to be working to some extent in conjunction with the rank and file element in the engineering industry.¹

(6) Another highly interesting growth of the last two or three years is the Association of Engineering and Shipbuilding Draughtsmen, which, beginning as a professional organisation, has steadily tended in the direction of Trade Unionism, and has recently decided by an overwhelming majority to register as a Trade Union. The Association of Industrial Chemists, still more recently formed, seems to be moving rapidly in the same direction. Both these bodies naturally include persons in receipt of very different rates of remuneration, ranging from comparatively highly paid workers to underpaid members of the salariat who are earning considerably less than many rank and file Trade Unionists.

In these and other cases there is a marked tendency towards the growth of a common consciousness on the part of members of the salariat which is at the same time a tendency in the direction of organisation along Trade Union lines. The possibilities of this movement are at present difficult to estimate, since it is still in its infancy in most industries, and in some is largely the product of war conditions. There is no doubt, however, that considerable significance does attach to it, and, if these Associations continue to develop with the rapidity with which they are developing at the present time, the problem of the attitude of the rank and file Trade Unionists towards them will become of the first importance. Many rank and file Trade Unionists are still apt to regard the professionals, and still more the foremen, as their natural enemies, and to refuse to have anything whatsoever to do with them or their organisations. If, however, the demand for some measure of control over industry is persisted in by the rank and file Societies, it is evident that some new accommodation will have to be arrived at between them and the organisations of foremen and professionals. The nature of this accommodation, and even the question whether it will ever be made, fall outside the scope of this book. Here it is only necessary to draw attention to the recent developments of organisation among these classes of brain-workers and supervisors.

¹ A similar attempt has recently been made with some success to organise foremen in the clothing industry.

SECTION 7.—RELATIONS TO EMPLOYERS

It is now time to deal with the present position of the Trade Union movement in its relation to employers and Employers' Associations. In practically all organised industries there exist regular methods of dealing with differences as they arise by means of negotiation of one kind or another. In most cases such negotiation has already taken the form of formally established Conciliation Boards or Joint Committees, representing on the one side the District Committees or National Executives of the Trade Unions, and on the other side the local Associations of Employers or their National Federations. The constitution and scope of these Conciliation Boards differ very widely from one case to another, both on account of the different circumstances of the various industries, and of variation in the strength and policy of organised Capital and Labour. It is, however, possible, without going into the details of particular Boards, to pass certain general comments upon the systems hitherto adopted.

(a) The scope of conciliation machinery may be more or less restricted in the sense that it may deal with a wider or with a narrower range of questions; thus, some Boards (*e.g.* the English Coal Conciliation Board) are confined purely to questions of general wage adjustments; others (*e.g.* the Building and Engineering Conciliation Boards and Joint Committees) deal also with working conditions, hours, overtime, and all other questions which ordinarily form the subject of dispute between Capital and Labour. There has been a certain tendency for the scope of Conciliation Boards to be extended for the purpose of bringing a wider range of questions under review; thus on the railways disputes have arisen concerning the right of the Conciliation Boards to deal with questions of "discipline" and "management."

(b) Conciliation Boards are nearly always based upon organisations of employers on the one hand and Trade Unions on the other. There are, however, a few Boards which are chosen by a direct vote of the whole body of workmen concerned, whether they belong to a Trade Union or not. This is the case with some of the local and works Boards in the iron and steel industry, and a similar position exists on the railways, where the Conciliation Boards set up for each important railway after the 1907 and 1911 disputes were in both cases based upon the vote of the whole body of railwaymen included within the terms of reference of the Boards. The National Union of Railwaymen, from a constitutional point of view, had nothing to do with the choice of the representatives, although naturally in most cases it got its own men elected. These, however, are exceptional cases, and normally Conciliation Boards are directly based on Associations of Employers on the one side and Trade Unions on the other.

(c) Conciliation Boards usually contain provisions for the post-

ponement of any drastic action, such as a strike or lock-out, until the case has been fully considered by the Board. This being so, clearly one of the most important questions in setting up a Board is how long the procedure of conciliation laid down will take to operate. In most industries negotiation begins locally, or with a local meeting between the Employers' Association and the Trade Union District Committee.¹ Failing a settlement locally, a national meeting follows, after a certain interval. In some cases, including the building industry, an additional stage is interposed in the form of a divisional Board, covering a wider area than a single district. The general tendency on the Trade Union side has been to speed up the procedure of conciliation to the greatest possible extent. The employers, on the other hand, have usually the desire to make it work as slowly as possible. In recent years some success has been achieved in making the procedure more rapid, notably in the revision of the Engineering Agreement after 1907, and of the Railway Scheme in 1911. Conciliation Boards may, and do, exist without any definite provision that no dispute shall take place until the matter has been discussed before them, but such instances are rare, although the advanced wing of the Trade Union Movement has often urged that this is the only form of conciliation, or rather negotiation, that is really acceptable to Labour.

(d) Conciliation Boards may or may not contain provisions for Arbitration. That is to say, the Board may be an instrument of pure negotiation on which the two parties meet and endeavour to thrash out their difficulties and reach a common agreement without outside intervention, or there may be special provision for the calling in of outsiders to deal with a question which cannot be settled by direct negotiation. The former is the case with the local and central conferences in the engineering industry, into which no element of arbitration, or so-called "impartiality," enters. Where an element of arbitration is introduced, it may be present in very varying degrees. Thus, in the Mining Conciliation Boards an independent chairman is only called in when the two parties fail to reach an agreement, and has only power to decide between the rival proposals of the two sides, without any authority to initiate a proposal of his own, or to follow the usual habit of arbitrators by splitting the difference. In other cases (*e.g.* the Boot and Shoe Agreement) there is a provision that all disputes not settled by direct negotiation must be referred to arbitration under a financial penalty upon Trade Unions or employers who fail to abide by the arrangements arrived at. In most cases the element of "impartiality" is only introduced after an attempt has been made to arrive at a direct settlement between the parties; but this is not universal, and in some cases the "impartial" chairman is present at all joint meetings.

¹ There may, or may not, be a preliminary stage of workshop negotiation on matters arising in a particular works.

Needless to say, this system of conciliation and negotiation, which applies in one shape or another to almost all organised trades and industries, is not found to anything like the same extent in those trades which are less well organised. In these cases the Trade Unions, where they exist, have usually to take up matters with the various firms individually, and are unable to secure any form of collective agreement. In other cases no Conciliation Boards have existed in the past because the employers have firmly refused Trade Union recognition. This was the case down to the war period with shipowners and dock employers in most ports, and it still remains the case for the greater part of the passenger transport industry apart from railways.¹

The war has considerably affected the operation of the machinery of conciliation and negotiation in those trades which are largely concerned with war production ; for although, even in those industries which are directly subject to the operation of the Munitions Acts, conferences between the two sides have not ceased to exist, their utility has been largely curtailed, and the chances of arriving at an agreement between the parties have been rendered very much more remote by the superimposition of compulsory arbitration. Of this aspect of the question we shall have more to say in a subsequent section. On the other hand, the war has for the first time made possible negotiations in certain cases in which pre-war efforts to bring the parties together had entirely failed. Joint Boards have been created for the various grades in the Mercantile Marine, National Conferences for the purpose of wage adjustments have been convened in the carting trades and in the chemical industry, and in many other cases the war has forced upon reluctant groups of employers the necessity of negotiating collectively with the Trade Unions. It is of course uncertain at the present stage how far these war-time expedients will result in machinery of a permanent character, although it would seem that, in so far as the provisions of the Whitley Report are made operative, there is likely to be a permanent increase in the amount of joint machinery between employers and Trade Unions.

There is one other matter in connection with the relations between employers and Trade Unions which must be touched upon here. In all organised single trades the Trade Unions have built up, both locally and nationally, codes of working rules and conditions under which alone their members are allowed or willing to work. These codes or by-laws, as they are sometimes called, are in some cases also agreed to by the organised employers, in which case they become incorporated in agreements, national or local. In other cases there is no formal agreement, and the observance of the by-

¹ Unless the recent arbitration award (March 1918) between the Transport Workers' Federation on the one hand and the Tramways and Light Railways Association and the Municipal Tramways Association on the other leads to a reversal of policy.

laws is enforced by the Trade Unions without any formal assent on the part of the employers. In addition to these written codes of rules, which are usually printed for the use of members, there is, of course, a mass of workshop customs, written and unwritten, agreed and not agreed, which are no less rigidly enforced by Trade Unionists as the essential conditions on which they are prepared to work. These unwritten customs and regulations, and to a less extent written codes of working rules and by-laws, have been, so far as the war trades are concerned, largely suspended during the war period, under a binding promise by the Government that restoration will take place after the war. In the case of the munitions trades they are suspended by a definite clause in the Munitions Act of 1915, and restoration is also promised in the Act: in other trades they have been suspended at the instance of the Government by the Trade Unions acting voluntarily; in these cases also promises of restoration have been made, but these promises have no legally binding character.

SECTION 8.—STRIKES AND LOCK-OUTS

The machinery of conciliation and negotiation described in the last section does not cover the whole of industry, and, where it exists, is not always successful in preventing disputes. Where no machinery for conciliation or negotiation exists, this does not mean that the workers, in the event of a grievance arising, proceed at once to the drastic remedy of a strike. It means probably that in the majority of cases a Trade Union is called in, and an attempt is made to settle the matter by direct negotiation. It is only where an employer or group of employers refuses to recognise Trade Unions or to negotiate with the accredited representatives of the men, that strikes occur in ordinary times without previous *pour-parlers* between the parties.

Even where the machinery of conciliation exists, strikes may occur in either of two cases: in the first place, the machinery of conciliation may fail to effect a settlement, and in this case, unless arbitration is provided for in the rules agreed to by the employers and the Trade Unions, the workers may resort to a strike or the employers to a lock-out, at any time after the breakdown of negotiations. Secondly, unofficial strikes, and, to a less extent, unofficial lock-outs, may occur before the conciliation machinery has been fully operated. It is often made a complaint against Trade Unions that failure to operate conciliation machinery is more frequent in their case than in that of the employers, and that breaches of agreement on the part of Trade Unions are unduly frequent. This, however, is a misunderstanding of the real situation. The employer controls industry and gives his orders as to the way in which industry is to be carried on. If the workmen desire an alteration they must either persuade the employer to agree to it or else come out on

strike. If, on the other hand, the employer desires an alteration, he does not, as a rule, declare a lock-out—he makes the alteration and leaves it to his workmen to strike against it. This is less true in proportion as an industry is highly organised; but even in the best-organised industries this is the method by which the employers all too often bring about changes in particular workshop conditions. Thus, the employer can, merely by altering conditions, compel his workers either to accept the change or to strike, and so give them the appearance of being the aggressors, even when their action is of a purely defensive character. Moreover, the employer usually desires to preserve the *status quo*, whereas the workmen usually desire to alter it. This is a further difference between the position of workmen in relation to strikes and that of the employers in relation to lock-outs. The lock-out is a far less necessary and easily handled weapon to the employer than the strike is to the workmen.

In an Appendix to this book statistics are given which show the number of strikes and lock-outs in the years preceding the war. The number and extent of strikes enormously increased during the years immediately preceding the war, and, whereas the first years of the twentieth century were, on the whole, years of industrial tranquillity, from 1911 onwards there was a growing industrial unrest. Even the figures of strikes do not convey an adequate idea of the change which came over the attitude of Trade Unionists during these years; for the number of concessions secured without recourse to strikes probably increased in quite as great proportion as the number of strikes. The prevalence of strikes during these years does not indicate necessarily any breakdown of the machinery of conciliation: it indicates merely that the workmen were in a state of greater industrial unrest, and that a larger number of demands for improved conditions was being brought forward. The proportion of settlements without recourse to a stoppage probably remained just as high during the years of unrest as during the preceding period.

The question is often asked whether the strike weapon is, on the whole, a success or a failure. This question is really unanswerable, since any attempt to measure the actual results of strikes and lock-outs gives an entirely misleading result. A strike may fail in attaining its object immediately; but that object may be attained shortly afterwards, perhaps by means of conciliation, as an indirect result of the strike, but without recourse to a further stoppage. This does not really mean that the strike has failed, and that conciliation has succeeded: it means that the strength and organisation among the workers is such that the concession has been gained. The question of the method employed is secondary: the real determining factor is the strength of organisation.

There is a further difficulty in answering the question whether strikes succeed or fail. An enormous proportion of strikes end, not in complete success or failure on either side, but in a compromise.

The workers secure something, but not the whole of what they want. Employers give up some things and retain others. Thus, where attempts are made to tabulate the results of strikes according to their success or failure, it is usually found that the majority fall into a middle group, and this middle group really includes a considerable proportion of compromises which are equivalent to successes for the one or the other side.

The strike is undoubtedly an inconvenient and in many cases a brutal weapon. It entails often much suffering upon the striker, and, where a great industry is concerned, it often has the effect of throwing out of work large numbers of persons who are not directly concerned in the question at issue. This, as we saw in an earlier section of this book, was one of the main reasons which led to the formation of the Triple Industrial Alliance. In addition, the strike, particularly in the greater industries, may entail considerable hardship upon the public. Nevertheless, there is no prospect at all that the organised Labour Movement will be induced to give up the right to strike, or to accept any limitation of it in normal times. Nor, indeed, even if limitations or restrictions were imposed, could they be really effective. The power to strike exists whether it is legalised or not, and so long as the workers remain in a position in which they have unsatisfied grievances, strikes will continue, and the right to strike will not be willingly surrendered. Negotiation machinery, and full recognition of Trade Unions, undoubtedly have the effect of considerably diminishing the number of strikes, and of securing settlements in many cases without recourse to the strike; but they achieve these results, as we saw in the last section, largely because the right to strike is present in the background, and the taking away of this right would be likely to result, not in a decrease in the number or severity of strikes, but in the breakdown of the machinery of direct negotiation between employers and Trade Unions.

SECTION 9.—RELATIONS TO THE STATE

We come to those types of industrial legislation in which the State interferes for the purpose of regulating the relations between employers and workmen. Before the war there had been for some time a marked tendency towards an increase in the scope of industrial legislation. It is true that the Factory Acts had not recently been amended or extended to any considerable extent; but since the coming to power of the Liberals in 1906 there had been a considerable number of Acts of Parliament regulating wages and conditions of labour in various industries. Notable among these were the Trade Boards Act of 1909, which provided for the fixing of minimum rates of wages in certain sweated occupations by Trade Boards, partly chosen from Employers' Associations and Trade Unions, and partly appointed by the Government Department concerned; the Shops Act, regulating the conditions of employment

of shop assistants and making provision for weekly holidays ; the various Acts dealing with coal mines, including the revised Coal Mines Act of 1911, the Coal Mines' Regulation (Eight Hours) Act of 1908, and the Coal Mines (Minimum Wage) Act of 1912. This last Act established as a temporary measure a new principle by laying down for a period of years minimum rates of wages for a class of labour which was at the same time highly organised and comparatively well paid according to current standards. This, however, was definitely a piece of emergency legislation passed as a direct result of the Miners' Strike of 1912, and not as an act of deliberate or considered industrial policy.

The Trade Boards Act calls for somewhat longer explanation. It is modelled upon similar legislation which, first in Victoria and other states of Australia and subsequently in many other countries, has been passed with a view to the elimination of the " sweating " system. Under it, Boards partly representative of employers and workers, and partly consisting of " appointed members " nominated by the State, were set up in a number of " sweated " trades, with power to fix minimum rates of wages for the various grades of workers employed. Although the procedure for the fixing and enforcement of minimum rates is exceedingly slow and cumbrous, although the inspection provided is quite inadequate, and although the policy pursued by the Boards has been conservative in the extreme, there is no doubt that the Act has done good work, both in raising the wages of the worst-paid workers, especially of the women, and in stimulating Trade Union organisation. The Act was first applied to four trades—tailoring (of certain kinds only), paper-box making, lace-finishing, and certain kinds of chain-making. Its scope has since been slightly extended by Provisional Order procedure, and it is expected that a more comprehensive measure will shortly become law with a view to after-war conditions. Such a measure should not only facilitate the application of the Trade Board principle to all unorganised and badly paid trades, but should also make the powers of the Trade Boards far more comprehensive and the procedure far more expeditious. The Corn Production Act of 1917, it may be noted, has already extended to agriculture a principle essentially the same as that of the Trade Boards Act.

State intervention in trade disputes was, before the war, of a casual and largely unregulated character. Under the Conciliation Act of 1896 the Board of Trade had certain very limited powers of intervention ; but these could only be exercised with the consent of the parties, and there was behind them no power of compulsory settlement of disputes. An inquiry into the general question was set up in 1911, when an Industrial Commission was appointed to inquire into the desirability of further intervention ; and a largely non-committal report from this body was followed by the creation of the Chief Industrial Commissioner's Department of the Board

of Trade under Sir G. R. Askwith. No new powers were, however, conferred upon this Department. Nevertheless, with the industrial unrest of 1911 and the following years, State intervention necessarily increased. The railway crisis of 1907 had been patched up without a stoppage by the intervention of Mr. Lloyd George; the 1911 railway strike led to further intervention and the appointment of a Royal Commission to report upon the points at issue. The mining strike of 1912, as we have seen, also led to State intervention, culminating in the passage of a special Act of Parliament.

Although no definite action had been taken, proposals for increasing and regularising State intervention in industrial disputes were very much in the air before the war. Compulsory arbitration in any complete form was usually regarded as impracticable on account of Labour opposition; but legislation suggested by the Canadian Industrial Disputes Investigation Act had been seriously proposed. This Act gives the Canadian Government power to appoint investigators to consider and report upon any threatened dispute in a public utility service, and makes a strike or lock-out illegal until the report has been issued. This Act is disliked by Canadian workmen on the double ground that it gives the employers ample time to get ready for a strike, and that the investigators are not really impartial.

Another proposal was that agreements voluntarily entered into by representative Trade Unions and Employers' Associations should be made legally enforceable over the whole of the trades and industries to which they relate. This proposal was favoured by some of the weaker Unions, particularly in the transport and general Labour groups. It did not, however, find favour with most of the stronger Trade Unions, which are opposed to further legislative interference with industrial disputes, even in the modified form suggested in this proposal.

It would take us too far afield to deal with many other types of legislation which have affected Trade Unionism, and which have served to bring the Trade Unions into much closer relation to the State. Amongst them we can only mention the Workmen's Compensation Act and the Health Insurance Act, while we must say rather more about the development of unemployment insurance during the last few years.

Following upon the establishment of Employment Exchanges under the Labour Exchanges Act of 1909 the State in 1911 applied the principle of compulsory insurance against unemployment to a group of industries of which the principal were engineering, ship-building, and building. The fund from which unemployment benefits were dispensed was a fund contributed in part by the State, in part by the employer, and in part by the workman through deductions from his wages made by the employer. Provision was made whereby this fund might be administered in certain cases through the Trade Unions themselves, and there was a further

provision enabling a Trade Union which paid unemployment benefit on complying with certain conditions to secure from the State a refund of a certain proportion of the total sum spent on unemployment benefit, *i.e.* the so-called "Ghent System." In practice, the unemployment insurance provisions of the Act are largely worked through the Trade Unions, and a considerable number of Trade Unions in non-insured trades have availed themselves of the rebates on their expenditure on unemployment benefit. Clearly the tendency of this Act was in the direction of making the Trade Union to some extent the administrative agent of the State, and the same tendency appeared also in the Health Section of the Insurance Act, under which most Trade Unions became Approved Societies for the purpose of administering State Benefits in case of sickness, etc. The full extent of this tendency had not become manifest when the war broke out, and the war has for a time interrupted the normal development. It is clear, however, that this tendency to make the Union an administrative agent of the State is one which raises an important issue of policy for the leaders of the Trade Union movement, and one upon which it is important that they should have a clear mind when they are dealing with the problems of reconstruction.

Although the war has interrupted the growth of the tendency described above, it has by no means meant that the relations between Trade Unions and the State have remained unchanged; rather it has forced development into new channels, and considerably accelerated its pace. The Munitions of War Acts have for the first time introduced as an emergency measure the principle of compulsory arbitration in trade disputes, not, it is true, over the whole of industry directly, but over all the industries which the Government regards as vital to the successful prosecution of the war. In all such cases strikes and lock-outs have become, or may be proclaimed as, illegal, and differences must be referred to arbitration by impartial persons appointed by the State. The principle which is here at work is of course quite different from that of the Trade Boards Act, since the Trade Boards Act only attempts to prescribe minimum rates of wages, and does not in any sense prevent the workers whose wages are regulated by such minima from asking for more, and taking such action as they choose in order to make their demands effective. Compulsory arbitration, on the other hand, necessarily involves the prohibition of strikes and lock-outs, with penalties upon the workmen and employers who refuse to abide by awards made by the arbitrators. It is, however, noteworthy that the compulsory arbitration imposed by the Munitions Act does not include any penalty upon the Trade Union itself; it thus continues the immunity secured by Trade Unions under the Trade Disputes Act, and if the State desires to punish workmen for refusing to abide by the award, it can fine only the individual workers concerned, and not the Trade Unions to which they belong.

The Munitions Acts have affected the relations between Trade

Unionism and the State, not only by introducing compulsory arbitration, but also in other ways. For instance, as we have seen in an earlier section, they have suspended in certain classes of establishments Trade Union regulations which are considered to have the effect of restricting production or employment, and they have to a considerable extent subjected the workmen to a new form of industrial discipline under State control. Under the Acts, workshop discipline can be enforced by means of prosecution of workmen before Munitions Tribunals appointed by the State. Such Tribunals, which consist of an "impartial" chairman, usually a lawyer, sitting with two assessors representing workmen and employers respectively, have, during the war, imposed upon workmen enormous numbers of fines for bad time-keeping, failure to obey lawful orders, striking in breach of the Acts, and many other offences. They have power to deal with employers also; but the number of prosecutions of employers has, in fact, been insignificant. For a long while the Munitions Acts also placed upon the workman a personal disability under the famous Leaving Certificate Clause (Section 7) of the Munitions Act of 1915, which prevented a workman who left work on munitions from obtaining other employment until six weeks had elapsed, unless before leaving he had obtained the consent of his employer, or of a Munitions Tribunal. This provision was, however, swept away after the Act of 1917, by which time the operation of the Military Service Acts and other causes had made its continuance largely superfluous from any point of view.

The State not only interferes with the conduct of industry by private employers and with the conditions of the workers employed by such employers; it is also itself an employer on a large scale. This was the case before the war in the Post Office, the Royal Dockyards and Arsenals, the Army Clothing factories, the Civil Service and other direct forms of Government employment. During the war, although the State has not, except in the case of national factories and arsenals, largely increased the number of its direct employees, it has become the indirect employer of large masses of workmen in the industries which are directly ministering to the necessities of war, including especially railways, ships, munitions factories, etc.

In those cases in which the State was the employer before the war it was sometimes very chary of granting recognition to Trade Unions claiming to represent its employees. Even where it granted recognition, the Trade Unions were often recognised only on the most niggardly terms. In the Post Office recognition was won only after long struggles, and was still in many respects incomplete. For instance, the right of the employees to organise in any Trade Union which they might choose was seriously threatened by the unwillingness of the Postmaster-General either to recognise the Trade Unions including members both of the operative and of the clerical grades of the service, or to recognise Trade Unions with members not only

in Government but also in private employment. In the Admiralty dockyards recognition was hardly conceded in any real sense, and obsolete methods of petition, deputation and the like still persisted to a great extent, although elementary forms of recognition had begun to make headway during recent years. The State as employer, while it afforded greater security, and in some cases higher rates of remuneration, than the average private employer, still left much to be desired, and in particular was apt to adopt towards its employees a highly autocratic tone. What applied to the State applied with even greater force in the case of local authorities, many of which refused recognition, or hedged it round with impossible conditions, and many of which further employed workers at disgracefully low rates of wages, and under exceedingly bad conditions. This does not mean that on the whole the State and local authorities were worse as employers than the average private employer, but it does mean that, whereas they ought to have been obviously better, in fact they were nothing of the kind.

During the war, the State, by its control of mines, railways, shipping, munitions establishments, etc., has found itself the virtual employer of huge aggregations of workmen in very highly organised industries. This has involved of necessity the recognition of Trade Unions on a very much more comprehensive scale, and with very much fewer reservations, than under pre-war conditions. The State has been compelled again and again to negotiate and come to agreements directly with Trade Unions representing the miners, railwaymen, and engineers, and there is no doubt that the lessons which it has learnt during the war period, as a result of its contact with these strongly organised classes of workmen, will be to some extent salutary, and that in dealing with its own employees in the future it will have these lessons in mind. Should some or all of the industries which have come under State control during the war period be permanently nationalised after the war, the effects of these lessons will of course be greatly intensified.

It is not within the scope of this book to prophesy with regard to the future, but it will be clear from our description both of pre-war and of war-time conditions that the element of State interference in industry, and in relation to the Trade Union movement in particular, has been continually on the increase during the last decade. There are no signs that this development is likely to be checked in the near future, although there is a marked movement in the direction of exercising this State interference to an increased extent through organisations representing the trades and industries concerned. This tendency may be seen, not only in the Whitley scheme for Joint Industrial Councils, but also and still more plainly in the constitution of some of the Boards of Control set up in various industries, notably wool and cotton, during the war period. The devolution of important administrative functions upon these representative bodies largely chosen by Employers' Associations and

Trade Unions seems to continue in a new form the tendency which we noted above, towards making the Trade Unions to some extent the administrative agents of the State in dealing with matters affecting the industries with which they are concerned.

We have said practically nothing throughout this section of the more specialised types of industrial legislation which bring the State into direct contact with Trade Unions. We must close with a further mention of one of these—a mention which is at the same time a general comment upon the whole section. From their very inception the administration of the Employment Exchanges has been bureaucratic in the extreme, and this high degree of centralisation and bureaucracy has profoundly antagonised both the employers and the Trade Unions. In connection with the reorganisation of Employment Exchanges for the purpose of demobilisation an attempt has been made to give the Exchanges at least the semblance of a more representative character, by the appointment in each town of Advisory Committees intended to represent the Trade Unions and Employers' Associations. This is a step in the direction which we have noted above ; but it is not as yet a very real step, since no actual power has been conferred upon these Committees, which remain of a purely consultative character.

Summing up, we may say that two tendencies are now at work in the moulding of the relations between the State and the Trade Union movement. These tendencies seem, and sometimes are, contradictory, although to a large extent they are capable of reconciliation. The one tendency is towards an increasing amount of direct State control over industry, involving an increasing amount of direct interference with Trade Unionism : the other tendency is in the direction of the devolution upon Trade Unionism of important functions to be executed under the authority of the State, or, to put it in other words, the use of the Trade Unions to some extent as a part of the administrative machinery of society. Many of the most recent developments seem to point to a fusion of these two tendencies into a system by which the State increases its nominal power over industry, but at the same time hands back most of the power which it takes to representative organisations of employers and workmen. Towards this policy and its various developments, which may well have the most important consequences for good or evil to the Trade Union movement, it cannot be said that the leaders of Labour have as yet assumed any definite or constructive attitude. That they should do so is one of the most urgent necessities of the time.



SECTION 10.—TRADE UNIONS AND THE LAW

From the first, the relations between Trade Unionism and the law have been close, if not cordial. According to the common law, a Trade Union, if it is not in itself illegal, at least comes into conflict with the law as soon as it takes any action for the regulation

of the conditions of the employment of its members. Hence it has come about that the whole of the rights of Trade Unions are dependent upon Statute Law, and that the Trade Unions, in the course of their career, have suffered several set-backs as a result of judgements delivered by reactionary judges in the Courts.

The present position of the law relating to Trade Unionism is exceedingly confused. The legal position of the Trade Unions themselves is regulated directly by five Acts of Parliament—the Trade Union Acts of 1871 and 1876, the Trade Disputes Act of 1906, the Trade Union Act of 1913, and the Trade Union (Amalgamation) Act of 1917. As this last has already been referred to in a previous section we need say nothing more about it here.

It is not possible in a short summary of this character to enter fully into the history of the two famous judgements which have so profoundly influenced the recent history of Trade Unions in this country. Both the Taff Vale case of 1902 and the Osborne Judgement of 1909 have had a profound effect upon the whole character of modern Trade Unionism, and have led to amendments of the law in order to bring it more into harmony with justice and with the demands of Labour. The Trade Disputes Act of 1906, the first and greatest achievement of the new Labour Party which was returned to the House of Commons in that year, did secure to the Trade Unions immunity for their funds from the consequences of "tortious" acts committed by their members, and did to this extent place the Trade Unions and their officials in a privileged position as regards the committing of certain types of "tort." This privileged position, however, is more apparent than real, since it is rather a special privilege given in order to redress a general disability. Under the Trade Union Acts the Trade Unions are subject to forms of regulation which are not extended to other types of voluntary associations. It was this special form of regulation which made the Taff Vale Judgement possible, and thereby necessitated the granting of special privileges by the Trade Disputes Act. Both the Taff Vale Judgement and the Osborne Judgement are evidences of the tendency of the Law in this country to impose upon Trade Unions all the obligations of "incorporation" without therewith conferring upon them any of the advantages which "incorporation" carries with it. This has led to an anomalous position which undoubtedly ought to be remedied; but it is impossible to remedy the present position of the law relating to Trade Unions by any piecemeal action, and it seems very doubtful whether any Government for some time to come will be likely to embark upon the highly controversial legislation which would be involved in any attempt to amend the Trade Union Acts as a whole. The employers are continually calling for the repeal of the Trade Disputes Act, which they regard as a one-sided piece of preferential legislation; but the repeal of this Act, not accompanied by the remedying of the legal disabilities of Trade Unions, and the placing of them to the full extent in as good a position as other

forms of voluntary association, would be a far greater injustice than any that is involved in the continuance of the present muddle.

The attitude of the law to Trade Unions has, as we have seen, been on the whole exceedingly reactionary, and any attempt by the Trade Unions to extend the scope of their powers has been resented, and if possible declared to be illegal; but along with this willingness to interfere with the free development of Trade Unions in their relations to other bodies—employers, the State, etc.—there is a considerable reluctance on the part of the law to interfere with the internal management of the Unions, or with the relation of their members one with another. This applies not merely to the definite exclusion of certain forms of interference under Section 4 of the Trade Union Act, 1871, but also to a general attitude on the part of the Courts, which has been evidenced on many occasions, notably during the constitutional crisis in the Amalgamated Society of Engineers in 1912. Moreover, Section 4 of the Trade Disputes Act to some extent precluded the Courts from interference in the internal relations of Trade Unions.

The present position of the law affecting Trade Unions is exceedingly complicated, and can only be clearly defined by reference both to the leading principles of British law and to a number of statutes which regulate not only Trade Unions but also other forms of association. It is, however, necessary to attempt a brief summary of the position, even though it is evident that such a summary cannot but be inadequate and even, in some respects, misleading.

(a) The legal position of Trade Unions in civil matters is principally governed by the Trade Union Acts of 1871, 1876, and 1913. The Act of 1871 in the main removed the common law illegality of Trade Unions by providing that a Trade Union should not be held to be unlawful merely because its objects are "in restraint of trade." This carried with it the legal recognition of agreements made by Trade Unions.

The Act of 1871, however, also contained a descriptive clause, inserted presumably for the purpose of identifying the types of associations included under the term "Trade Unions." This clause (as modified by the Act of 1876) defined a Trade Union as an association existing for the regulation of the relations between workmen and masters, or between workmen and workmen, or between masters and masters, or the imposing of restrictive conditions on the conduct of any trade or business, and the provision of benefit to members. This may have been a substantially true description of the scope of Trade Union action in the 'seventies; but, as the movement grew, the scope of its activities expanded, and, in particular, it began to take part in political action.

Out of this expansion grew the famous Osborne cases. Mr. Osborne, a member of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, claimed an injunction against the expenditure of the funds of the Society on political objects. The case, which went from court to

court up to the House of Lords, was finally decided against the Society, on the ground that the objects of a Trade Union, as defined in the Trade Union Acts, must be regarded as inclusive. No mention being made of political action, such action by a Trade Union was declared illegal, and a further case extended the same principle to local as well as national politics.

Legislative action to put matters right was at once demanded by the Labour movement, and at last, in 1913, a new Trade Union Act, partially destroying the effect of the Osborne Judgement, was passed. This Act in the first place made it lawful for a Trade Union to engage in any lawful activity sanctioned by its rules. Certain specified political activities, including election work and (by a decision of 1915) subscription to a political newspaper were specially excluded from this general enabling power, and it was provided that, in order to engage in these activities, a Trade Union must (a) take a ballot of its members, (b) provide for the exemption from contributions to be used for this purpose of any members desiring to be exempted, and (c) pay for such activities only out of a special fund to be kept separate from the general funds of the Union. It is under these conditions that Trade Unions now participate in political activities.

(b) The position of Trade Unions in relation to the criminal law is governed by a different body of statutes, of which the most important are the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act of 1875 and the Trade Disputes Act of 1906. The Act of 1875 provides that "no combination to do any act in furtherance of a trade dispute shall be indictable as a conspiracy unless such act, if committed by one person, would be punishable as a crime." It also imposes penalties for violence, intimidation, watching, besetting, following, and various other offences—provisions which were used in order to make effective Trade Union action largely ineffective especially in cases of picketing, etc. The position as regards picketing, however, has been more favourably redefined in the Trade Disputes Act.

The Act of 1906 arose out of a case which has had even more far-reaching effects upon the Labour movement than the Osborne Judgement. A person who procures a breach of contract is liable to an action for damages by one of the contracting parties unless adequate justification exists. Under this common law principle the Taff Vale Railway Company in 1902 proceeded against the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants for damages sustained in connection with a strike involving a breach of contract. The case went finally to the House of Lords, and the Union was mulcted in damages to the tune of £23,000. Here, again, legislation at once became necessary, if Trade Union action was not to be utterly crippled. A great outcry ran through the Labour movement, and there is no doubt that the return of 30 Labour members to the House of Commons in 1906 was very largely a result of the Taff

Vale case. The Government introduced an unsatisfactory Bill, only partially remedying the grievance. The Trade Unions, however, demanded complete redress, and ultimately the Labour demands were accepted in substance, and the Trade Disputes Act of 1906 became law.

This Act provides, *inter alia*, that a "tortious" act done by a Trade Union is not actionable if it is done in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute, on the ground that it has induced a breach of a contract of employment, or that it is an interference with a person's trade or business. It also lays down that no action can be brought against a Trade Union or its members acting on their own and the Union's behalf in respect of a "tortious" act committed on behalf of the Union. This provision holds good whether or not a trade dispute exists.

This very brief summary of the legal position is not intended to do more than convey a general impression of the relations at present subsisting between Trade Unions and the law. For the most part the Judges are entirely out of sympathy with the Trade Union movement, which they still tend to regard as an unwarrantable interference with the "liberty of the subject." This being so, Trade Unions must always expect under present conditions to have statute law illiberally interpreted, and "case" law accordingly weighted heavily against them. Their only redress in such circumstances is to wring fresh legislation from Parliament every time the Courts perpetrate a new injustice.

SECTION II.—TRADE UNIONS AND POLITICAL ACTION

It is not proposed in this book to deal at all fully with the political action of Trade Unions; but it is necessary to say a little on the subject in order to put the action and policy of the Trade Unions in a clear and general perspective.

Political action by Trade Unions did not, of course, begin with the Labour Party. Long before there existed a Labour Party, or even a Labour group in the House of Commons, there were members sitting there as the representatives of Trade Unions, especially of the Miners' Federation. Here, however, we are not concerned with the historical aspect of the question, but merely with the general character of Trade Union political action at the present day. The great majority of the big Trade Unions, as we saw in the first part of this book, are associated with the Labour Party; at its last Annual Conference in January 1918 the Labour Party had an affiliated membership of 2,465,131, of which 2,415,383 were accounted for by the 123 Trade Unions affiliated. These figures, however, give an altogether inadequate idea of the actual Trade Union connection with the Labour Party, since many Unions pay to it on considerably less than their actual strength. Thus, the National Union of Railwaymen, with 400,000 members, paid only on

130,368, and there are many less extreme examples of the same tendency. The only large national Unions which remain outside the Labour Party are the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union, the Amalgamated Union of Co-operative Employees, and a few Unions of some importance in the building and iron and steel industries.

In addition to the national Labour Party there are also, as we have seen, Local Labour Parties in most centres in which any form of industry on a considerable scale is carried on. Where no separate Local Labour Party exists the work has often been done in the past by the local Trades and Labour Councils. Under the new reorganisation of the Labour Party Constitution, carried out in February 1918, efforts are being made to extend very widely the principle of Local Labour Party organisation, the object being to set up a Local Labour Party in every possible constituency.

These Local Labour Parties will undertake, not simply national Parliamentary work, but also in many cases work in connection with elections for local authorities, Town Councils, Boards of Guardians, County Councils and the like, work which is also carried on to a very considerable extent by local Trades and Labour Councils. We are here concerned only with that part of their work which has to do with industrial questions. Just as in Parliament the Labour Party presses for the nationalisation of the various industries and the securing of improved conditions for the workers employed in them, so locally the Local Labour Parties and their representatives on Local Government bodies press for municipalisation, and for better conditions for the employees of local authorities. Labour members have played a considerable part upon committees and Town Councils which are largely concerned with municipal trading, *e.g.* upon tramways committees, and other large employing departments of local authorities. Objection has sometimes been taken to their presence on such bodies on the ground that they are not impartial, because they represent the employees and not the general body of the public. They have effectively retaliated by pointing out that most of the other members of such committees are also not impartial, because they represent distinctively the point of view of the employer.

During recent years the tendency towards a combination of other sections of local authorities against the Labour section has become marked in those towns in which Labour's municipal activity has been strongest, and repeated endeavours have been used to rule Labour representatives out of any active part in determining the conditions of municipal employment by keeping them off the committees principally concerned with such matters.

Both nationally and locally, Labour's political representatives have endeavoured to extend their control of the conditions of employment not merely to direct employees of the public authorities, but also to the employees of private firms which hold public contracts. The method adopted for this purpose has been that of the

Fair Wages Clause. Parliament, as the result of negotiations initiated by the Labour Party, adopted in 1909 a clause providing that contractors "shall, under penalty of a fine or otherwise, pay rates of wages and observe hours of labour not less favourable than those commonly recognised by employers and trade societies (or, in the absence of such recognised wages and hours, those which in practice prevail amongst good employers) in the trade in the district where the work is carried out, etc. etc."

Similar clauses, in some cases more stringent and in some less stringent in character, have been forced by Labour representatives upon many local authorities.

Legislation, as we have seen in earlier sections of this book, touches industry and Trade Unionism at a vast number of points. Naturally, the Labour Party plays its part in dealing with all such questions when they come under discussion. The Party has been often criticised for its inaction both before and during the war; and the criticism has been powerfully supported. It is, however, easy to exaggerate the possible achievement of a quite small group in a large assembly, especially when this group consists of men who are for the most part unfamiliar both by training and by experience with the atmosphere into which they are thrown.

Great hopes have been aroused by the reorganisation of the Labour Party, at the beginning of 1918, on a broader basis. The ranks of the Party, through the Local Labour Parties, have been opened to individual members, and an attempt has been made to appeal to all workers "by hand or by brain." Of the results of this development it is as yet too soon to speak; but all the evidence goes to show that the strength and following of Labour in the country have greatly increased. The advent of a largely new electorate under the Representation of the People Act, however, makes it almost impossible to forecast with any confidence the political future of Labour.

In another section we have mentioned the notorious Osborne Judgement, which has had so large an influence upon the political activity of the Trade Union Movement. The operation of that Judgement was substantially reversed, as we have seen, by the Trade Union Act of 1913, and Trade Unions are now free to carry on political activities after the taking of a ballot of their members, and provided that exemption from payment of parliamentary levies is granted to any member who signifies his desire to be exempted. There is now sufficient experience of the working of this Act to make it quite clear that very few persons in any Union will claim exemption, although there may be difficulty in some cases in which exemption is not claimed in collecting the full parliamentary levy. This is particularly the case in Unions with a low rate of subscription, and a correspondingly loose form of organisation.

SECTION 12.—RELATION TO CO-OPERATION

There is still no close or coherent relationship between Trade Unionism and the Co-operative Movement. Co-operators and Trade Unionists do, indeed, exchange fraternal delegates at their Annual Congresses, and there exists a standing Joint Committee of Trade Unionists and Co-operators for dealing with some of the problems arising out of the position of Trade Unionist employees of Co-operative Societies. But, although there have been attempts from time to time to promote closer unity between the two movements, no substantial result had been achieved down to the outbreak of war.

This does not mean that the two movements had not been of considerable mutual assistance. A local Co-operative Store has often aided the Trade Unions greatly in time of strikes, and the Co-operative Wholesale Society's Bank has more than once come to the aid of a Trade Union with a highly opportune advance. The C.W.S. was the instrument used by the British Trade Union Movement for sending supplies to Dublin during the famous dispute of 1913-14, and there are many other isolated instances of such common action. Moreover, the part which the Co-operative Movement might play in connection with industrial disputes had often been suggested and discussed.

Pre-war discussions generally dealt mainly with the industrial relations that might be established between Trade Unionism and Co-operation, though the question of the entry of the Co-operative Movement into politics was a "hardy annual" among Congress resolutions. There would, however, have been comparatively little prospect of an early entry of Co-operation into closer relations with the other sections of the Labour Movement had it not been for the war. The Excess Profits Tax levied upon Co-operative dividends has done in two years what half a century of agitation might hardly have accomplished. The Co-operative Movement has entered politics.

It is true that this development has taken place independently, and that the Co-operative Parliamentary Committee is a body quite apart from the Labour Party. Moreover, the first Co-operative candidate stood, not as a Labour man, but as a co-operator. Nevertheless, the entry of co-operation into politics does mean a much closer approach to the other wings of the Labour Movement, and already, in a number of centres, Co-operative Societies are affiliating to Local Labour Parties. In others, notably in Plymouth, special Joint Labour and Co-operative Associations for propagandist purposes have been called into being. This does not mean that the whole of the Co-operative Movement is flocking into an alliance with political Trade Unionism, or even that the Co-operative Parliamentary candidates will necessarily be Labour men, or have Labour sympathies; but it does mean that the current is setting steadily in the direction of closer union between the two movements.

It is possible that difficulties may arise in this connection out of the quite extraordinarily bitter quarrel which ranges between the various "craft" and "industrial" Unions catering for Co-operative employees, which have the backing of the Trades Union Congress on the one hand, and the Amalgamated Union of Co-operative and Commercial Employees on the other. The A.U.C.E., which only recently opened its ranks to workers outside the Co-operative Service, is a Union of 75,000 members, most of whom are employed by Co-operative Stores or Wholesale Societies. In Part I. of this study the problem of Trade Union structure involved in the existence of the A.U.C.E. was discussed, and it is therefore only necessary to refer to its position here. The relentless warfare waged against the A.U.C.E. by the Unions affiliated to the Trades Union Congress may, however, at any time lead to awkward complications. It is reassuring to know that inside both the A.U.C.E. and the Shop Assistants' Union, which leads the other side, there are strong, unofficial forces making in the direction of amalgamation.

Co-operative Societies, while they are above the average of other employers in the distributive trades, are by no means model employers. The Trade Unions which have members employed by them, so far from finding agitation unnecessary, have quite often to take up an aggressive industrial attitude in order to secure a remedy for obvious grievances. Strikes occur, not so frequently as in private employment, but more frequently than ought to be necessary under a democratic employer, and the relations between the Societies and their employees differ hardly at all from those which exist in private employment. Closer union with the other wings of the Labour Movement would perhaps do something to improve the attitude of Co-operators as employers; but the fact that matters stand where they do stand is not reassuring. There are still not a few Co-operative Societies which resolutely refuse to adopt the minimum wage scales drawn up by the Trade Unions and by the Women's Co-operative Guild, which in many respects has led the advanced wing of the Co-operative Movement in recent years.

PART IV

THE FUTURE OF TRADE UNIONISM

SECTION I.—THE IDEALS OF TRADE UNIONISM

IN the three preceding parts of this book I have surveyed briefly the structure, the internal government, and the immediate policy of the Trade Union Movement. It now remains to say something of the wider ideals which are behind the movement, whether in the minds of its leaders or members, or in those of particular groups which, although numerically small, exercise an influence upon the framing of policy. I have already had occasion to mention in passing a few of those movements, because immediate Trade Union policy is naturally affected in a greater or less degree by the more distant ideals which animate the members of the great Trade Unions. For instance, in speaking of the shop-stewards' movement, I could not altogether leave out the idea of control of industry, and in speaking of Industrial Unionism, or Union by industry, as a method of Trade Union organisation, I inevitably came close to Industrial Unionism as a theory of industrial action of a revolutionary kind.

It cannot be said that the Trade Union Movement in Great Britain is anything like so inclined to theory as most of the Continental movements. It has grown up gradually, and in response to immediate necessities, and it bears upon itself all the marks of this growth and upbringing. It has adjusted itself slowly and painfully to most changing conditions, it has accumulated a vast mass of conservative tradition which is a source at once of strength and of weakness. It finds it difficult to be idealistic because its organisation has been so largely determined by purely utilitarian considerations. Nevertheless, it is impossible for any one to doubt that there is a growing mass of idealism and of theory in the Trade Union Movement itself, even apart from those movements which affect Trade Unionism while they do not arise directly out of it.

It is true that there was, in the middle of the last century, a body of theorists closely connected with the Trade Union Movement, who had a definite, if a narrow, conception of the function of Trade

Unionism. Mr. Frederic Harrison and the Positivist group, as well as Thomas Hughes and the Christian Socialists, fought hard for the freeing of Trade Unionism from artificial legal restrictions at a time when Labour combination was still commonly regarded as a crime, at least as soon as it produced any fruits in overt action. These men did great service to the Trade Unions in the fight for free combination from 1867 to 1876 ; but after 1880 their influence gradually waned, as their fundamental individualism made them less and less in harmony with the growing demands of Labour for legislative intervention in industry. Indeed, from the time when the Trade Unions first began to turn their attention to politics, this demand was made with increasing vigour. The coal miners, led by Alexander MacDonald, and the cotton operatives were foremost in the new movement ; but on occasion they had most of the Trade Union world behind them. In fact, even at the time when the influence of Mr. Harrison and his friends was at its height, the Trade Union leaders who relied so largely upon their help still remained opportunists, and supported or opposed State or industrial action without much conscious reference to any comprehensive theory of the function of Trade Unionism or of the State. Their administration of the Trade Union Movement was throughout cautious and conservative in the extreme ; but it did not acquire this caution from any constructive theory.

From the time of the Dock Strike of 1889 onwards the Trade Unions were to a considerable extent captured by the Socialists, and resolutions at Trade Union Congresses reflected clearly the aspirations of Fabianism and the Independent Labour Party. This process of permeation of the Trade Unions by I.L.P. Socialism continued almost unchallenged up to the beginning of the years of serious industrial unrest which date from 1911 ; but with the coming of industrial unrest, whatever its cause, new theories of social organisation and industrial action began to make themselves heard. In 1911 and 1912 it was of Syndicalism that we were told, and a considerable propaganda, based partly upon French Syndicalism and partly upon American Industrial Unionist theory, sprang up all over the country under the energetic leadership of Mr. Tom Mann. The wave of Syndicalism, however, soon passed, and when it receded there were left two theoretical methods which show signs of greater vitality upon the soil of Great Britain. The first of these was Marxian Industrial Unionism, the second, Guild Socialism, or National Guilds.

Marxian Industrial Unionism had been in the field before the wave of Syndicalism came to this country, but it failed to make any considerable headway until the industrial conditions became favourable to its operations. When the wave of Syndicalism receded, Industrial Unionism of this type did not recede with it. The new situation in the Trade Union world caused the Industrial Unionists, or many of them, to modify their outlook, and their propaganda in

its new form began to attract many adherents. The earlier Industrial Unionists had begun with the assumption that the old Trade Unionism was no use, and ought to be scrapped completely and absolutely, and that the only way to salvation was the foundation on a class basis of a new Unionism. They looked for "One Big Union," divided into "Locals" by districts, and into industrial sections according to the various industries, and forming a part of the world-wide movement—the Industrial Workers of the World. The Syndicalists, on the other hand, were for the most part amalgamationists, and urged, not the scrapping of the old Unions, but their amalgamation along industrial lines, with a view ultimately to the formation of a great class organisation for Labour as a whole. The Industrial Unionism which was left behind when Syndicalism disappeared had largely adopted these tenets, or was at least prepared to work inside the existing Unions for amalgamation as a step towards the completer industrial structure which it had in mind.

Broadly speaking, the theory of the Industrial Unionists is this. They regard the State in all its forms as the expression of Capitalism and as existing for the protection of property, and accordingly they desire its complete destruction. They look forward instead to a Society administered by the workers through their industrial organisations, just as the Bolsheviks of Russia claim to-day that all power belongs to the Soviets. On the purely industrial side they demand the complete control of industry for the working-class organisations, and are not prepared either for any accommodation with Capitalism or for any sharing of control with the State, however democratic it may in theory become. On the question of the method by which the transition to the system of Society which they have in mind is to be accomplished they differ. They agree, indeed, that industrial organisation and industrial action are the principal things; but some of them believe that working-class political action is necessary for the purpose of hampering and of ultimately abolishing the Capitalist State; while others believe that political action should be shunned completely by the working class, which should confine itself entirely to the industrial weapon. Throughout, Industrial Unionists of both schools base their doctrine upon Marxian economics, upon the materialist conception of history above all else. They are few in numbers, but their indirect influence has been during the past few years considerable, particularly inside the National Union of Railwaymen, in the shop-stewards' movement, and among the South Wales miners. The Central Labour College, now jointly owned by the South Wales Miners' Federation and the National Union of Railwaymen, has been one of their chief propagandist agencies.

National Guildsmen, or Guild Socialists, agree in many respects with the Marxian Industrial Unionists, but have at the same time important points of disagreement. Whereas the Industrial Unionists

desire to destroy the State and to make the Unions the sole organs of the community, National Guildsmen desire to retain the State in a modified form and to establish a co-operation and a balance between it and bodies which they call "Guilds," to be created out of the Trade Unions by way of union by industry. They desire that the internal affairs of industry should be directly controlled by these "industrial" organisations, but they allow also for a certain element of State intervention, either for the safeguarding of the interests of the "consumers," or on behalf of the community in dealing with questions of "public policy." They extend a welcome to movements making in the direction of working-class control over industry, and their propaganda has been largely directed to pressing the need and devising schemes for amalgamation on "industrial" lines, and to pointing out the possible next steps for the Trade Unions in connection with the winning of control, particularly in the workshops. There are differences of opinion and policy among them, just as there are differences among the Industrial Unionists. Generally they tend, without sacrifice of ultimate idealism, to the more possibilist outlook, to pay more attention to the next steps, while keeping the ultimate goal in view. Their influence in the Trade Union movement has been more indirect and less concentrated than that of the Industrial Unionists, but there is no doubt that their propaganda has had a considerable effect, particularly in the railway and engineering industries and in the Post Office. They have also, without doubt, considerably influenced the policy of the Socialist Societies.

These two tendencies between them do not command the conscious adherence of more than an infinitesimal fraction of the workers in the Trade Unions, most of whom are content to face immediate problems as they arise, without considering more ultimate issues. On points of immediate policy, however, there is no doubt that these two tendencies do both represent very much what the great mass of the younger active Trade Unionists are thinking. There is no doubt at all that the orientation of Trade Union policy during the last few years has been to an increasing extent in the direction of control, both in relation to workshop organisation and to questions of discipline. Trade Unionists, without diminishing their attention to questions of wages, hours, and general conditions of labour, are continually coming to think more of wider questions of policy, and are endeavouring to secure at least a share in the control and administration of the factories and other places in which they are employed. This movement has been particularly marked in the industries which have been principally affected by the tendency to union by industry, or by the special conditions imposed by the war. The shop-stewards' movement, as we have seen, is a marked expression of it—centred in the engineering industry, but also showing signs of expansion into other forms of factory production ; while similar movements of the rank and file

with very similar objects are to be found on the railways and in the mining industry. Everywhere there is a tendency to regard the question of participation in control as the next vital question of policy which the Trade Union Movement will have to face. No doubt this tendency does not result solely or even mainly from the activities of the propagandist groups of which we have spoken, but is largely forced upon the Trade Union Movement by the conditions of factory industry on the one side and the growing strength of Trade Unionism on the other. The development is in a sense inevitable, but it is none the less true that the propagandist movements of the type discussed, although they cannot make new policy where the conditions are adverse, are playing a great part in shaping a policy which is dictated by present-day industrial conditions.

This is, of course, only a very inadequate account of these propagandist movements. Any complete account would take us too far afield from our survey of present Trade Union developments. For a more complete statement giving all their aims and methods the reader is referred to the extensive literature dealing with the subject.

SECTION 2.—TRADE UNIONISM AND EDUCATION

Clearly the ideals described in the preceding section, or even any approximation to them, would make a very great demand indeed upon the intelligence and statesmanship of the Trade Union Movement. They would involve not merely wise heads at the top of the great Trade Unions, but also a wide diffusion of practical capacity and of knowledge through a considerable proportion of the membership. The first question that always confronts the idealist who pins his faith to the Labour Movement is, how far this intelligence and knowledge exist, or can be called into being.

The Trade Union Movement in this country has always professed enlightened views upon educational questions. Year after year Trades Union Congresses and Labour Party Conferences have declared in favour of thorough-going reform of our educational system, and, although a dissentient voice has sometimes arisen from the Trade Unions in the cotton and wool industries when questions of half-time and continued education have come under discussion, the Trade Union leaders, even in these industries, have usually taken an enlightened view. Labour, then, has a clean record so far as its educational demands are concerned, and Labour members upon public bodies, notably upon local Education Authorities, have nearly always assumed an advanced attitude both with regard to such questions as higher education, school feeding, medical and dental treatment, etc., and with regard to the status and emoluments of the teaching profession. We are here concerned, however, not so much with Labour's attitude to the wider questions of education in the community, as with the work that has been done

in spreading the benefits of education more widely amongst Trade Unionists themselves.

There have been for some years past several agencies in the field which attempt to meet the demands of the workers for adult education. The oldest of these is the Working Men's College, founded in 1854 by F. D. Maurice and the Christian Socialist group. Conservative in tradition, and hampered by its undemocratic constitution, this body fell into the background, though there have been recently some small signs of emergence. It works entirely by means of evening classes and college societies. Of a somewhat similar type, but often far more democratic, are certain provincial institutions, of which Beechcroft at Birkenhead is the best. This is a sort of social centre for classes, etc., which works in close conjunction with the Trades Council and the local Trade Union branches. Toynbee Hall and other "settlements" pursue similar activities to a certain extent, with varying degrees of undemocratic benevolence.

Ruskin College, Oxford, founded in 1899 by an American philanthropist, belongs to a different type, in that it is now much more working-class in character and management, and, besides, is a full-time residential college. It passed after a chequered career, which included a strike by a majority of the students in 1908, under the control of representative Labour leaders. The Central Labour College, which was founded by those who seceded from Ruskin College in the course of the strike in 1908, has itself since been acquired by two great Unions—the National Union of Railwaymen and the South Wales Miners' Federation. Both these institutions are residential colleges, at which full-time instruction is given to a small number of students from the working class, most of whom hold scholarships from Labour organisations of one kind or another. These may to some extent serve to leaven the lump, but the whole body of students whom they produce only amounts to a few dozens a year, and clearly this cannot go very far in altering the general level of working-class education. In addition both colleges have done a certain amount of extension work. The Central Labour College has been particularly active in promoting classes in the industrial districts under tutors who are largely ex-students of the college. The Central Labour College and Ruskin College also maintain correspondence courses on a fairly large scale.

The other main agency by which education has been carried into the industrial districts is the Workers' Educational Association, which has branches in most parts of the country and a considerable membership among Trade Unionists, as well as a great deal of support by way of affiliation from the big Trade Union and Labour organisations. The W.E.A. works very largely by the promotion in the industrial centres of tutorial classes which are conducted under the auspices of joint committees in connection with the various universities. On these joint committees the universities and the working-class organisations are equally represented. In the year

before the war there were in all 145 tutorial classes under the auspices of eleven different universities, and practically every university in England and Wales was responsible for at least one class. In addition to these tutorial classes the W.E.A. itself directly organises large numbers of one-year classes and shorter courses in all parts of the country.

Between the Central Labour College and the Workers' Educational Association there has long existed a feud which has been waged with considerable bitterness—at least on the side of the Central Labour College. The C.L.C. and its auxiliary, the Plebs League, inform their supporters that they “can promise to be candid but not impartial.” They set out to teach definitely Marxian doctrines based upon the materialist conception of history and the class war. The W.E.A., on the other hand, has always maintained that it is “non-sectarian and non-party political,” and has set out to give teaching of an “impartial” character. Opinions differ in the Labour Movement as to the extent to which this impartiality is possible, or has been actually attained. The extremists connected with the Central Labour College usually maintain that under the existing order impartiality is impossible, and that neither is the W.E.A., in any case, the body that could attain it, nor are the universities the types of bodies through which impartial education can be administered.

Into the merits of this quarrel the present writer, who has been for years closely associated with the W.E.A. without becoming blind to its shortcomings, has no desire to enter. It need only be pointed out that the total educational facilities available for adult workers are miserably inadequate to meet the demand that has already arisen, let alone to meet the needs of the case. The Trade Union Movement, while it has given a measure of support both to the W.E.A. and the C.L.C. and to certain other educational organisations, has, on the whole, not yet realised the paramount importance of education to the Labour Movement. Where educational bodies have been at work the difference has soon made itself manifest. Classes in industrial and political history, economics, current social problems, and many other subjects, have served to awaken keen interest among local leaders of Labour in many centres, and the students who have been equipped in such classes have in a large number of cases been able to play an important part in shaping the subsequent policy of Labour in their districts. If the power of the Trade Unions is to be increased and wisely used, there can be no doubt that one of the most important of the tasks before it is the task of educating its own membership. It is necessary not merely to increase the number of subscribing members of Trade Unions, but also to create inside every organisation a nucleus of keen members with a clear understanding of the problems both of Society as a whole and of the industry with which they are concerned—an understanding which alone can make them capable of winning

in industry and in Society the power to which they are justly entitled.

The machinery of Trade Unionism could be used, to an almost infinite extent, for the building up of a working-class educational movement. National Unions could afford to spend some of their resources upon education—indeed, it would most handsomely pay them to do so. Trades Councils, Trade Union branches, and District Committees could, to a far greater extent than now, undertake the organisation of classes and circles, and endeavour to make ordinary Trade Union meetings far more educational in character than they are to-day. There is practically no limit to what could be done if only there existed among the national and local leaders of Labour a clear idea of the part which education must play if the working class is ever to achieve emancipation from the wage-system.

SECTION 3.—TRADE UNIONS AND THE CONTROL OF INDUSTRY

I come now to an attempt to draw together the threads of this exposition of the present position of Trade Unionism into some sort of conclusion.

Let us begin with the actual. How far do the Trade Unions in the industrial system to-day exercise control over industry? It is clear that in so far as they exercise control at all, this control is mainly of a negative character. That is to say, Trade Unions can, to a great extent, impose conditions upon employers with regard to the terms under which industry is to be conducted, but they do not themselves actually prescribe the methods of industrial administration. Every collective bargain that is made by a Trade Union with an employer or Association of Employers embodies certain restrictions upon the manner in which the employer is to run "his own business." Every working rule or by-law which the Trade Union lays down for the observance of its members is also an instance of such interference and restriction.

Thus, when employers speak of Trade Unions as "restrictive organisations" they are saying what is to a great extent true; but when they go on to conclude from this that the influence of Trade Unions upon the organisation of industry is a malign influence they draw a false deduction. Any body which is excluded from the giving of direct commands can operate only by way of restriction. If I cannot say how industry is to be carried on by giving orders directly in the workshop or office, my only way of interfering is to say to those who have the authority to give such orders that in giving them they must conform to certain conditions. The Trade Union, excluded from power over management, can only make its voice felt by prescribing indirectly conditions which limit the power of management, whether these limitations be for good or for ill.

In this indirect sense there can be no doubt that Trade Unions do to a considerable extent control industry. In the great industries

there exists a mass of what we may term "Trade Union legislation," that is to say, direct agreements between employers and Trade Unions which bind the organisers of industry as firmly as statute law. There exist also many rules laid down by Trade Unions, but not formally endorsed by the employers, which are no less effective in prescribing the conditions of industrial management.

A few examples of such rules will serve to drive home the point we have in mind.

When a Trade Union makes a rule that none of its members shall work at less than a certain wage, or for more than a certain number of hours in a week, or that for all overtime its members shall receive at least time and a quarter or time and a half, it is legislating for the industry and controlling the industry quite as fully as the State when it passes a Factory or Minimum Wage Act, and is taking away from the employer and transferring to itself a certain sphere of industrial control. In laying down such general conditions of industrial organisation the Trade Union creates a precedent for further types of interference. It confines itself in the early stages of its operation to endeavouring to establish certain generalised conditions applicable to a whole industry or occupation, and to enforcing these conditions as minima upon the employers concerned. A further step is taken when in addition to laying down general minima the Trade Union proceeds to lay down more specialised rules for the administration, not of the whole industry, but of particular factories or groups of factories.

To this class belong most of the Trade Union regulations to which employers take the greatest exception. In the organised industries they have learnt by experience to accept the principle of collective bargaining with the Trade Unions on general questions affecting the industry as a whole, *i.e.* wages, hours, and general conditions of labour; but it seems to them a mere monstrous invasion of their rights when the Trade Unions claim, in addition, to prescribe regulations for workshop organisation, or to dictate the manner in which the employer shall deal with particular employees, or groups of employees, in *his* factory. The employer then roundly accuses the Unions of "restriction of output," and very often in industries in which the precedent has not been clearly established, refuses to negotiate upon such questions. Gradually, however, the Trade Unions make headway in face of the employers' opposition. Agreements regulating workshop organisation, made perhaps between the workmen in the shop and the employer, but ratified by the Trade Union or its District Committee, become more and more frequent. The employer is compelled to realise that collective bargaining cannot be made to stop short absolutely at the most general principles, and to recognise the right of the Unions to deal also with these further questions. In addition, a great deal of similar detailed regulation takes place, not under the formal authority of the Trade Unions, but under agreement of an informal character

between groups of Trade Unionists in particular workshops. One of the most important forms of Trade Union control over industry, especially in those Unions in which the skilled craftsmen are strong, consists in the enforcement of workshop customs, often unwritten, but recognised generally as proceeding from the Trade Union, and as forming a part of the collective action of organised Labour. An instance of such workshop customs can be easily found in almost any industry. Printing "chapels" have their strongly established customs in particular shops, the engineering Trade Unionists lay down strict regulations with regard to the "manning" of particular classes of machines, or the rates to be paid for doing particular jobs. The textile workers, the miners, and many other classes of workers have similar regulations applying to individual mills, pits, etc.

One of the most important forms of this collective intervention in industrial control centres round the question of "discipline." More and more in recent years the Trade Unionists in a works, and following their lead, the Trade Unions themselves, have claimed the right to question and criticise actively the disciplinary methods employed by foremen and managers. This applies not only to codes of rules prescribed by establishments to their employees; it applies also to the treatment meted out to particular workers for supposed breaches of discipline. Many strikes, both authorised and unauthorised, have centred round this question in recent years, and it may be remembered that one of the principal questions at issue in the negotiations for a revised Railway Conciliation Scheme centres round the inclusion of questions of discipline within the scope of collective bargaining between the National Union of Railwaymen and the Railway Companies, and the method of procedure to be adopted in dealing with disciplinary cases.

We are not concerned here so much with the wisdom or unwisdom of the actual regulations and customs enforced by Trade Unions, as with the fact that in the aggregate these customs do represent a considerable control by the Trade Unions over the management of industry. The negative character of this control does not alter the fact that it is a real form of control, and that by this negative interference the Trade Unions are playing an increasing part in the administration of industry. Moreover, the line is sometimes hard to draw between negative and positive control, and it is easy to see that by a greater extension of their power of intervention and of laying down conditions by which employers have to abide, the Trade Unions might pass to a more positive form of control, beginning, perhaps, within a restricted sphere, but capable at least in theory of indefinite expansion. A parallel that is sometimes used in this connection is worth citing here. Parliament, it is sometimes pointed out, did not begin as a controlling or governing body. It began as an advisory body which prescribed to the Crown conditions under which alone it was prepared to render service in the sense of providing the revenue necessary for the State; but from

this negative and critical position Parliament passed, by a series of stages, into a position of positive control over government. In the same way, it is suggested, the indirect control at present exercised by Trade Unions is capable of an expansion which would not merely increase its amount, but change its character fundamentally, until it developed into a system of positive control and industrial management by the workers.

Clearly there are many obstacles in the way of any such complete development, and even of any great extension of the control at present exercised by the Trade Unions. Some of these obstacles will have appeared very clearly in the course of this survey of the present position of Trade Unionism. For instance, it will have been clearly seen that the present state of organisation in the Trade Union Movement is far from adequate even to the task which Trade Unions have to perform at the present time, and that it would be still less adequate to the tasks suggested for it by Industrial Unionists or National Guildsmen. The overlapping between one Trade Union and another, the rivalries and differences of policy between Trade Unions representing different sections of workers within a single industry, the lack of effective co-ordination between the Unions in the various industries: all these things and many others make the Trade Unions of to-day incapable of exercising any complete control over the management of industry. As we have seen, movements towards amalgamation and federation of Trade Unions, and more conscious movements in the direction of securing an organisation which would unite in a single Union all the workers employed in each industry, while they are active, have not yet achieved any result which is considerable in comparison with the work that remains to be done. Before we can imagine the Trade Unions exercising any complete control we have to imagine a drastic reconstruction of the machinery of the Trade Union Movement.

But even union by industry, as it is generally understood, would not provide bodies capable of completely controlling industry. The bodies which are called Industrial Unions to-day do not include, or even aim at including, the whole personnel of an industry. They include perhaps, or aim at including, all manual workers in an industry, and even some sections among the clerical workers; but the higher grades of management, and still more the professional grades which take an important part in most industries to-day, are left at present almost entirely untouched by organisation, or at best are organised apart in associations of their own. If the Trade Unions sought to control industry in any complete sense, they would be confronted with the necessity either of bringing into their ranks the professionals and managers who perform essential industrial functions, or else of training up within their own ranks men capable of taking their places—a task which would be further complicated by the necessity of retaining these men within the Labour Movement when, after they had been trained by the Unions, the

employers tried to entice them away with tempting offers of salaried positions.

I dwelt, in an earlier section of this book, upon the relations between the Trade Unions of to-day and the various classes of supervisory and professional workers, and it will be seen from what was said there that, although a process of assimilation is undoubtedly beginning, that process has not yet gone very far. How far the new Labour Party with its aim of uniting all classes of workers, by hand or by brain, will minister to a closer union of these various forces it is too soon yet to anticipate.

If we suppose the enormous obstacles recounted in the preceding paragraphs to have been overcome, that is to say, if we suppose the Trade Unions to have reorganised themselves upon "industrial" lines, and to have brought within their ranks a sufficient proportion of the professional and managerial personnel of industry to be able to exercise effective control of industrial processes, how far, then, would the road be clear for the complete control of industry by Trade Unions so metamorphosed and enlarged? There would still remain clearly the great problem of "trading," of the buying and selling of commodities and materials as apart from the actual productive processes. It is conceivable that the Trade Unions might succeed in supplanting the producing employer, and in taking over direct control of mines, factories, workshops, and railways, but how far could they hope to supplant the trader who employs comparatively little labour, but who deals with some of the most essential branches of industry in the wider sense?

To treat of this problem adequately would take us far beyond the limits of this study, and our object here is only to indicate the magnitude of the task. It may be true that, as some schools of social theorists maintain, it is the province of the Trade Union to supplant the employers and to assume control of factories and other places of work, whereas it is the function of the State to supplant the traders and merchants, and to assume control of all the raw materials of industry. There has been to some extent a tendency in this direction during the war period, and the State, under stress of war conditions, has become the largest merchant the world has ever known. How far these developments will remain after the war is a question far beyond the scope of this book. It is, however, impossible entirely to ignore the problem, because it is inevitably involved in any scheme for the complete control of industry by Trade Unions. In the view of the writer of this book the Trade Union Movement is tending strongly in the direction of claiming control, and this tendency is certain to be maintained and greatly strengthened. From the negative stage and the restrictive stage in which the Union merely imposes from outside conditions upon the employer, who retains in his hands the actual management of industry, the Trade Unions are beginning to pass to the stage in which they, too, have their share of direct power in management.

I believe that this development will continue to the end, and that it will result in a system under which the Trade Unions are changed into bodies including the whole effective personnel of industry and completely controlling industry in conjunction with the State. While this process is going on on the side of the Trade Unions, I believe that the State ought, during the period of transition, more and more to supplant the merchant, and to take out of his hands the function of passing the raw material of industry from the hands of the first producer to the factories in which it is further manufactured.

Thus there would develop a situation in which the pressure of the State from one side and the pressure of the Trade Unions from the other would ultimately extrude or absorb altogether the employer and the trader, or rather—including both in a single phrase—the capitalist.

The suggested system in which the results of this process are envisaged is called, as we have seen in an earlier section, Guild Socialism, or National Guilds. There will no doubt be many who will not be prepared to accept this conclusion, even while they will approve the present drift of policy in the Trade Union Movement in the direction of demanding and securing a greater element of industrial control. There are some who are content if they can see the next steps with tolerable clearness, and who do not ask that a complete picture of the coming Society should present itself to them. I do not belong to that school of thought: I can work only in the light of an ideal: the next steps appear to me to possess significance only in so far as they are part of a wider development which has not merely a beginning but also an end. The precise manner in which the change will come about, and the precise structure of the Society which will result from it, may well be in doubt, but in my view the whole meaning of Trade Unionism and the whole significance of recent developments in the Trade Union world lie in the fact that, consciously or unconsciously, the Trade Unions are moving towards a system fundamentally different from the capitalist system, in that, under it, the complete control of industry will be placed in the hands of the workers themselves to administer as a trust for the community in conjunction with a democratic State.¹

¹ This book does not in any sense pretend to give an exposition of the ideas of National Guilds, or, indeed, any clear view of the way in which Trade Union control over industry can be developed or exercised. For this question the reader is referred to other books in which the subject is more completely developed. Of my own writings, see especially the closing chapters of *The World of Labour*, and practically the whole of *Self-Government in Industry*.

APPENDIX A

MEMBERSHIP OF ALL TRADE UNIONS

Year.	Number at end of Year.	Membership at end of Year.	Percentage, increase (+), decrease (-), on the previous Year.
1899	1,310	1,860,913	..
1900	1,302	1,971,923	+ 5.9
1901	1,297	1,979,412	+ 0.3
1902	1,267	1,966,150	- 0.6
1903	1,255	1,942,030	- 1.2
1904	1,229	1,911,099	- 1.6
1905	1,228	1,934,211	+ 1.2
1906	1,250	2,128,635	+10.0
1907	1,243	2,425,153	+13.9
1908	1,218	2,388,727	- 1.5
1909	1,199	2,369,067	- 0.8
1910	1,195	2,446,342	+ 3.3
1911	1,204	3,018,903	+23.4
1912	1,149	3,287,884	+ 8.9
1913	1,135	3,987,115	+21.5
1914	1,123	3,918,809	- 1.7
1915	1,106	4,141,789	+ 5.7
1916	1,115	4,399,696	+ 6.2

APPENDIX B

MEMBERSHIP OF TRADE UNIONS BY INDUSTRIES, 1915¹

Groups of Trades.	Number of Unions at end of 1915.	Membership at end of 1915.
BUILDING—		
Carpenters and Joiners	2	101,927
Builders' Labourers	15	26,783
Others	45	99,765
MINING AND QUARRYING—		
Coal Mining :		
Northumberland, Durham, and Cumber- land	13	161,149
Yorkshire	5	138,182
Lancashire and Cheshire	16	85,882
Midlands and Kent	25	155,449
Wales and Monmouthshire	10	177,321
Scotland	11	110,378
Other Mining and Quarrying	9	28,822
METAL, ENGINEERING, AND SHIPBUILDING—		
Iron and Steel Manufacture	14	77,595
Ironfounding	9	49,522
Engineering	59	352,049
Shipbuilding	13	110,418
Miscellaneous	77	43,918
TEXTILE—		
Cotton :		
Weavers	43	208,315
Others	103	136,409
Other Textiles	90	92,219
Textile Printing, Dyeing, Warehouse- men, etc.	40	70,788
CLOTHING—		
Boot and Shoe	11	64,990
Tailoring and other Clothing	23	49,095
TRANSPORT—		
Railway	6	384,042
Tramway and other Land Transport	16	94,733
Seamen	12	116,141
Dock, Canal, and Riverside Labour	23	142,088
Printing and Allied Trades	32	97,290
Woodworking and Furnishing	79	65,210
Shop Assistants, Clerks, etc.	11	111,107
Other Trades	203	175,658
General Labour	14	452,859
Employees of Public Authorities	77	146,689
Totals	1,106	4,126,793

¹ The figures for the war period are misleading, because many Unions deduct from their total their members who are serving with the colours.

APPENDIX C

MEMBERSHIP OF TRADE UNIONS BY INDUSTRIES, 1910-1915

Groups of Trades.	1910.	1911.	1912.
Building	156,985	173,182	203,773
Mining and Quarrying	731,370	752,527	757,351
Metal, Engineering, and Ship- building	370,093	414,896	479,308
Textile	380,541	437,856	479,266
Clothing	67,124	74,423	91,832
Railway Service	116,214	185,513	202,329
Tramway and other Land Trans- port	48,603	85,389	68,517
Seamen	25,930	88,575	104,908
Dock, Canal, and Riverside Labour	54,476	154,061	138,920
Printing	74,275	77,252	76,949
Other Occupations	303,039	349,154	434,515
General Labour	69,171	176,211	187,831
Total	2,397,821	2,969,039	3,225,499
Percentage Increase (+) or De- crease (-) on the previous year	+3.2	+23.8	+8.6
Groups of Trades.	1913.	1914.	1915.
Building	247,685	235,828	228,475
Mining and Quarrying	914,989	870,198	857,183
Metal, Engineering, etc.	538,751	557,769	633,502
Textile	518,871	497,494	507,731
Clothing	105,975	102,538	114,085
Railway Service	326,192	336,671	384,042
Tramway and other Land Trans- port	95,416	96,563	94,733
Seamen	125,518	129,004	116,141
Dock, Canal, and Riverside	153,654	143,263	142,088
Printing	84,429	92,283	97,290
Other Occupations	485,477	494,495	498,664
General Labour	331,234	366,703	452,859
Total ¹	3,928,191	3,918,809	4,126,793
Percentage Increase (+) or De- crease (-) on the previous year	+21.8	-0.24	+5.3

¹ The figures for the war period are misleading, because many Unions deduct from their total their members who are serving with the colours.

APPENDIX D

INCOME, EXPENDITURE, AND FUNDS OF 100 PRINCIPAL UNIONS

Year.	Membership at end of Year.	Income.		Expenditure.		Funds at end of Year.	
		Amount: £	Per Member: s. d.	Amount: £	Per Member: s. d.	Amount: £	Per Member: s. d.
1904	No. 1,207,086	2,129,423	35 3½	2,055,528	34 0¾	4,713,245	78 1
1905	1,226,007	2,235,040	36 5½	2,081,924	33 11½	4,866,361	79 4½
1906	1,313,494	2,371,306	36 1¼	1,978,088	30 1½	5,259,579	80 1
1907	1,478,257	2,528,365	34 2½	2,082,575	28 2	5,705,369	77 2½
1908	1,448,755	2,777,974	38 1	3,243,675	44 5¾	5,239,668	71 10
1909	1,445,080	2,595,265	35 11	2,716,504	37 7¼	5,118,429	70 10
1910	1,480,993	2,727,880	36 10	2,650,239	35 9½	5,196,070	70 2
1911	1,830,278	2,964,842	32 4¾	2,519,865	27 6½	5,641,047	61 7¾
1912	2,011,017	3,249,048	32 3¾	3,841,694	38 2½	5,048,401	50 2½
1913	2,382,604	3,619,804	30 4½	2,927,095	24 6¾	5,741,110	48 2½

APPENDIX E

EXPENDITURE OF 100 PRINCIPAL TRADE UNIONS ANALYSED

Year.	Dispute Benefit.		Unemployment Benefit.		Other Benefits and Grants.		Working and Miscellaneous Expenses.			
	Amount.	Percentage of Total Expenditure.	Amount.	Percentage of Total Expenditure.	Amount.	Percentage of Total Expenditure.				
1904	£	119,129	5.8	£	660,273	32.1	426,439	20.8		
1905		216,480	10.4		528,642	25.4	903,676	43.4	433,126	20.8
1906		157,589	8.0		428,546	21.7	926,222	46.8	465,731	23.5
1907		143,355	6.9		468,922	22.5	981,940	47.2	488,358	23.4
1908		608,192	18.8		1,030,094	31.8	1,068,837	32.9	536,552	16.5
1909		160,659	5.9		952,500	35.1	1,071,385	39.4	531,960	19.6
1910		353,232	13.3		702,973	26.5	1,066,865	40.3	527,169	19.9
1911		318,559	12.7		456,736	18.1	1,161,755	46.1	582,815	23.1
1912		1,379,713	35.9		602,335	15.7	1,151,700	30.0	707,946	18.4
1913		302,985	10.4		493,582	16.9	1,335,309	45.6	795,219	27.1
Average 10 years		375,989	14.4		632,460	24.2		549,532	21.1	

APPENDIX F

STRIKES AND LOCK-OUTS, 1913 AND 1917

Groups of Trades.	1913.			1917.		
	Number of disputes beginning.	Number of work-people involved.	Aggregate duration in working days of all disputes in progress.	Number of disputes beginning.	Number of work-people involved.	Aggregate duration in working days of all disputes in progress.
Building	198	40,002	823,829	53	6,897	85,300
Coal Mining	163	203,245	1,297,814	116	267,045	1,098,400
Other Mining and Quarrying	29	10,833	357,770	12	7,100	72,400
Engineering	173	52,666	1,095,264	94	316,499	2,427,900
Shipbuilding	122	27,247	149,895	49	40,091	326,000
Other metal	97	72,776	1,742,536	38	30,109	165,100
Textile	243	93,510	2,028,200	65	62,887	653,300
Clothing	75	15,227	173,910	42	13,042	145,800
Transport	123	86,225	1,245,092	40	26,740	188,400
Other trades and employees of public authorities	273	67,194	1,016,422	179	50,317	351,300
General dispute ¹	1	20,000	1,700,000
Total	1,497	688,925	11,630,732	688	820,727	5,513,900

¹ This relates to the dispute at Dublin which began in August 1913 and ended in February 1914, affecting a large number of different trades.

APPENDIX G

THE PRINCIPAL TRADE UNIONS ARRANGED IN OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

(Membership figures are in all cases only approximate.)

A.—MINING

The principal organisation is the (M.F.G.B.) Miners' Federation of Great Britain (800,000). This consists of 18 affiliated Associations in the following districts (approximately in order of size):—(S.W.M.F.) S. Wales (150,000), (D.M.A.) Durham (120,000), Yorkshire (120,000), Scotland (100,000), Lancashire and Cheshire (80,000), Midland Federation (60,000), Northumberland (45,000), Derbyshire (40,000), Notts (35,000), N. Wales, Cumberland, Cleveland, Leicestershire, S. Derbyshire, Bristol, Somersetshire, Forest of Dean, Kent.

In addition, a number of distinct mining crafts have Societies of their own in most districts, each craft being again federated in a National Federation. The principal Federations of this type are as follows:

The National Federation of Colliery Deputies', Examiners' and Firemen's Associations.

The National Federation of Colliery Enginemen and Boilermen.¹

The National Federation of Colliery Mechanics.

A number, but not all, of the Craft Unions connected with coal mining have recently formed a National Council of Societies representing Colliery Workers other than miners. In addition to colliery Craft Unions, the Council includes a number of general Labour Unions and other Societies whose membership is not confined to collieries.

In addition, the following Societies, connected with various types of mining and quarrying, are of importance:

National Union of Cokemen and By-Product Workers.

Cumberland Iron-Ore Miners' and Kindred Trades Association.

National Union of Quarry Workers and Settmakers.

North Wales Quarrymen's Union.

B.—RAILWAYS

(N.U.R.) National Union of Railwaymen (400,000).

(A.S.L.E. and F.) Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (38,000).

(R.C.A.) Railway Clerks' Association (60,000).

¹ Only some of the colliery enginemen's Unions are in this Federation. Others are affiliated to the National Federation of Enginemen, which includes Societies not confined to collieries, among them the National Union of Enginemen, which has members in collieries, iron and steel works, textile works, etc.

In addition, most of the metal and wood working Craft Unions have members in the railway engineering shops, and the general Labour Unions have also a small number of members.

C.—TRANSPORT

The principal body is the (T.W.F.) National Transport Workers' Federation (c. 250,000), to which most of the principal Unions are affiliated. The chief Unions are as follows:

(a) *Seamen, etc.*—

(N.S.F.U.) National Sailors' and Firemen's Union (60,000).

National Union of Ships' Stewards, Cooks, Butchers and Bakers (20,000).

Marine Engineers' Association.

Many marine engineers are also in the A.S.E.

(b) *Waterside Workers*—

Amalgamated Society of Watermen, Lightermen and Bargemen (5000).

(N.U.D.L.) National Union of Dock Labourers (50,000).

Scottish Union of Dock Labourers (10,000).

(Dockers) Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers' Union (65,000). (See also under General Labour.)

Irish Transport Workers' Union (20,000).

The general Labour Unions have large numbers of members in waterside work.

(c) *Vehicle Workers*—

Amalgamated Association of Tramway and Vehicle Workers (30,000).

(L.P.U.) London and Provincial Union of Licensed Vehicle Workers (25,000).

Scottish Horse and Motormen's Association (12,000).

Mersey Quay and Railway Carters' Union (10,000).

(N.U.V.W.) National Union of Vehicle Workers (10,000).

(U.C.A.) United Carters and Motormen's Association (8000).

Amalgamated Carters, Lorrymen's and Motormen's Association (7000).

There are also a number of other local Carters' Unions, while many carters are in such Unions as the N.U.R., A.U.C.E., Municipal Employees' Association, etc., and in the general Labour Unions.

D.—METAL

(a) *Iron and Steel*.—The principal organisation is the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation (see p. 52). This consists of four Societies, of which the most important are the British Steel Smelters' Association (20,000) and (B.I.S.A.K.T.A.) the British Iron, Steel and Kindred Trades Association (60,000). The Confederation, which acts virtually as a single industrial unit, has a gross membership of 85,000. Still outside the Confederation are the National Federation of Blast Furnacemen (20,000), the Amalgamated Steel and Iron Workers of Scotland (10,000), and several small Societies.

The mechanics attached to the industry are mostly organised in the Unions of their crafts, while a certain proportion of the labourers are in the general Labour Unions.

(b) *Engineering and Shipbuilding*.—The principal Society is the (A.S.E.) Amalgamated Society of Engineers (280,000). Other important engineering Societies include, (F.S.I.) Friendly Society of Ironfounders (35,000), Amalgamated General Toolmakers (37,000), (S.E.M.) Steam Engine Makers' Society (26,000), (U.M.W.A.) United Machine Workers' Association (23,000), National Society of Brassworkers (25,000), Associated Blacksmiths and Ironworkers (18,000), United Kingdom Smiths and Strikers (12,000), (E.T.U.) Electrical Trades Union (23,000), National Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers and

Braziers (12,000), Associated Iron Moulders of Scotland (8000), Central Iron-moulders' Association (7000), (U.P.M.) United Patternmakers' Association (10,000), and Association of Engineering and Shipbuilding Draughtsmen (10,000).

In Shipbuilding, the two most important Societies are the United Society of Boilermakers and Iron and Steel Shipbuilders (85,000) and the Ship-constructors and Shipwrights' Association (38,000), which have a close working arrangement.

The Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades Federation, a loosely-knit body, includes most of the above, except the A.S.E., and also includes many woodworking and other Unions with members in shipyards or engineering works. The general Labour Unions have a very large membership among the less skilled workers in these industries, and two of them are affiliated to the Federation.

(c) *Miscellaneous Metal Trades*.—There are numerous Unions, mostly small, in this group, in which the general Labour Unions have also many members.

E.—BUILDING AND WOODWORKING

(A.S.C. and J.) Amalgamated Society of Carpenters, Cabinetmakers, and Joiners (110,000).

(G.U.C. and J.) General Union of Carpenters and Joiners (10,000).

(O.B.S.) Operative Bricklayers' Society (23,000).

(O.S.M.)¹ Operative Stonemasons' Society (10,000).

¹ National Amalgamated Society of Operative House and Ship Painters and Decorators (30,000).

¹ National Association of Operative Plasterers (6000).

National Association of Operative Plumbers (15,000).

National Association of Builders' Labourers (10,000).

(U.B.L.U.) United Builders' Labourers' Union (8000).

(N.A.F.T.A.) National Amalgamated Furnishing Trades Association (12,000).

Amalgamated Society of Woodcutting Machinists (10,000).

Most of the large Unions in the building industry belong to the Associated Building Trades Council, and a closer National Federation is now being formed.

F.—PRINTING AND PAPER

The principal organisation is the National Printing and Kindred Trades Federation (c. 100,000), to which all the considerable Societies belong. The principal Societies are as follows:

(T.A.) Typographical Association (23,000).

(L.S.C.) London Society of Compositors (12,000).

(S.T.A.) Scottish Typographical Association (5000).

Amalgamated Society of Lithographic Printers (5000).

(N.A.T.S.O.P.A.) National Amalgamated Trade Society of Operative Printers' Assistants (10,000).

(N.U.P.W.) National Union of Printing and Paper Workers (25,000).

National Union of Bookbinders and Machine Rulers (10,000).

G.—TEXTILES

(1) *Cotton*—

(C. and B.R.O.) Amalgamated Association of Card, Blowing, and Ring Room Operatives (60,000).

Amalgamated Association of Operative Cotton Spinners, Self-Actor Minders and Twiners (including piecers 50,000).

¹ In these cases there are separate Societies for Scotland.

Amalgamated Association of Weavers, Winders, Warpers, etc. (200,000).

Amalgamated Association of Beamers, Twisters, and Drawers (6000).

General Union of Power-Loom Overlookers' Associations (10,000).

General Union of Lancashire and Yorkshire Warpdressers' Associations (3500).

Amalgamated Society of Textile Warehousemen (6000).

Most of the above are grouped for political and general industrial purposes in the United Textile Factory Workers' Association, while the Weavers, Overlookers, Beamers, and others in the manufacturing section of the cotton industry are federated for industrial purposes in the Northern Counties Textile Trades Federation.

(2) *Wool*—

(G.U.T.W.) General Union of Textile Workers (50,000).

National Society of Machine Woolcombers (10,000).

National Union of Woolsorters.

Amalgamated Society of Stuff and Woollen Warehousemen.

Bradford and District Wool, Top and Noil Warehousemen's Union (2000).

(3) *Dyeing, Bleaching, and Finishing*—

Bleachers, Dyers and Finishers' Association (Bolton Amalgamation) (30,000).

Amalgamated Society of Dyers, Bleachers, and Finishers (25,000).

National Society of Dyers and Finishers (11,000).

The small dyers' Unions in the Midlands are grouped in Midland Counties Federation of Bleachers and Dyers.

(4) *Hosiery*—

Leicester and Leicestershire Amalgamated Hosiery Union (4000).

(5) *Lace, Linen, Jute, etc.*—

Amalgamated Society of Lace Makers (2500).

Dundee Union of Jute and Flax Workers (5000).

Dundee Mill and Factory Operatives' Union (Jute and Flax) (10,000).

Leek and District Textile Federation (Silk).

NOTE.—Most of the Societies in the wool, dyeing, and hosiery groups, and also a few in other groups, are federated in the National Association of Unions in the Textile Trade.

H.—CLOTHING

(1) *Boots and Shoes*—

(N.U.B.S.O.) National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives (70,000).

(2) *Tailoring*—

United Garment Workers' Association (20,000).

Amalgamated Society of Tailors and Tailoresses (12,000).

Scottish Operative Tailors' and Tailoresses' Association (5000).

I.—FOOD

Amalgamated Union of Operative Bakers and Confectioners and Allied Workers (14,000).

Scottish Bakers' Federal Union (8000).

J.—POTTERY

National Society of Pottery Workers (20,000).

K.—DISTRIBUTION AND CLERKS

(N.A.U.S.A.W. and C.) National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen, and Clerks (85,000).

(A.U.C.E.) Amalgamated Union of Co-operative and Commercial Employees and Allied Workers (85,000).

(N.U.C.) National Union of Clerks (30,000).

L.—AGRICULTURE

National Agricultural Labourers' and Rural Workers' Union (50,000).

Scottish Farm Servants' Union (13,000).

The Workers' Union has also many members in agriculture.

M.—PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

(1) *Post Office*—

Postmen's Federation (65,000).

Postal and Telegraph Clerks' Association (27,000).

Fawcett Association (6000).

Post Office Amalgamated Engineering and Stores Association (12,000).

These Societies and others are federated in the National Joint Committee of Post Office Associations. The first two are now on the point of amalgamation, while the other two, with a number of smaller Societies, have recently formed a new Federation of Post Office Societies.

(2) *Civil Service*—

The Civil Service Alliance and the Civil Service Federation are the two largest bodies. The former includes only clerical Societies; the latter also some of the principal Post Office Societies and other Associations of Public employees. The Second Division Clerks' Association, the Assistant Clerks' Association, the Customs and Excise Federation, and the newly formed Society of Civil Servants (including the higher grades) are the principal Associations.

(3) *Local Government*—

(M.E.A.) Municipal Employees' Association (27,000).

Most organised municipal employees are in such Unions as the Tramway Workers, and other Vehicle Workers' Union, Craft Unions of various trades, or in general Labour Unions.

N.—GENERAL LABOUR

(W.U.) Workers' Union (350,000).

(N.U.G.W.) National Union of General Workers (250,000).

(N.A.U.L.) National Amalgamated Union of Labour (140,000).

(Dockers) Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers' Union (65,000).

(N.F.W.W.) National Federation of Women Workers (50,000).

National Warehouse and General Workers' Union (20,000).

Gas, Municipal and General Workers' Union (25,000).

Most of the above, with the exception of the Women Workers, are included in the National Federation of General Workers (c. 700,000), which also includes one Carters' Union and the National Amalgamated Union of Enginemmen (30,000).

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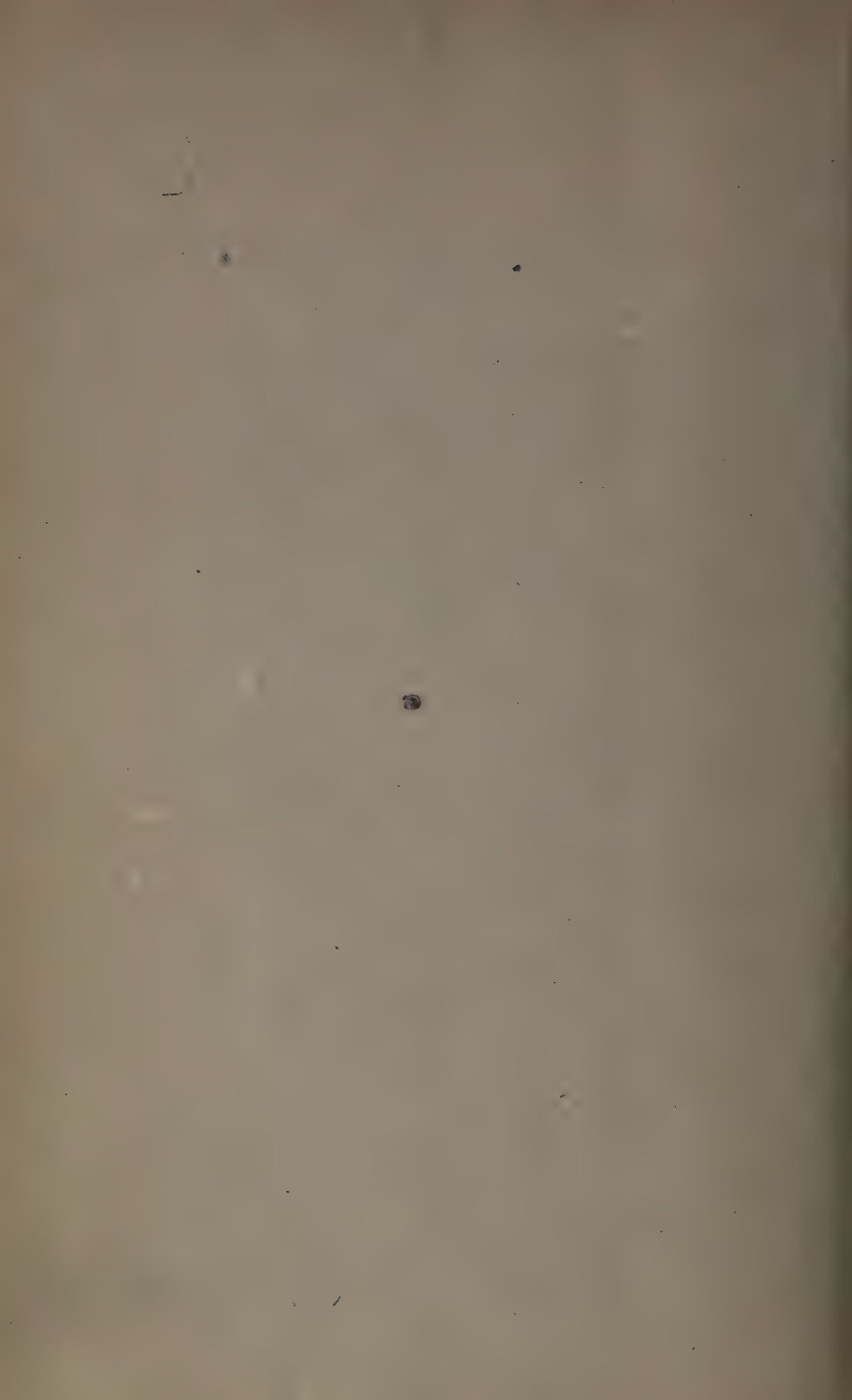
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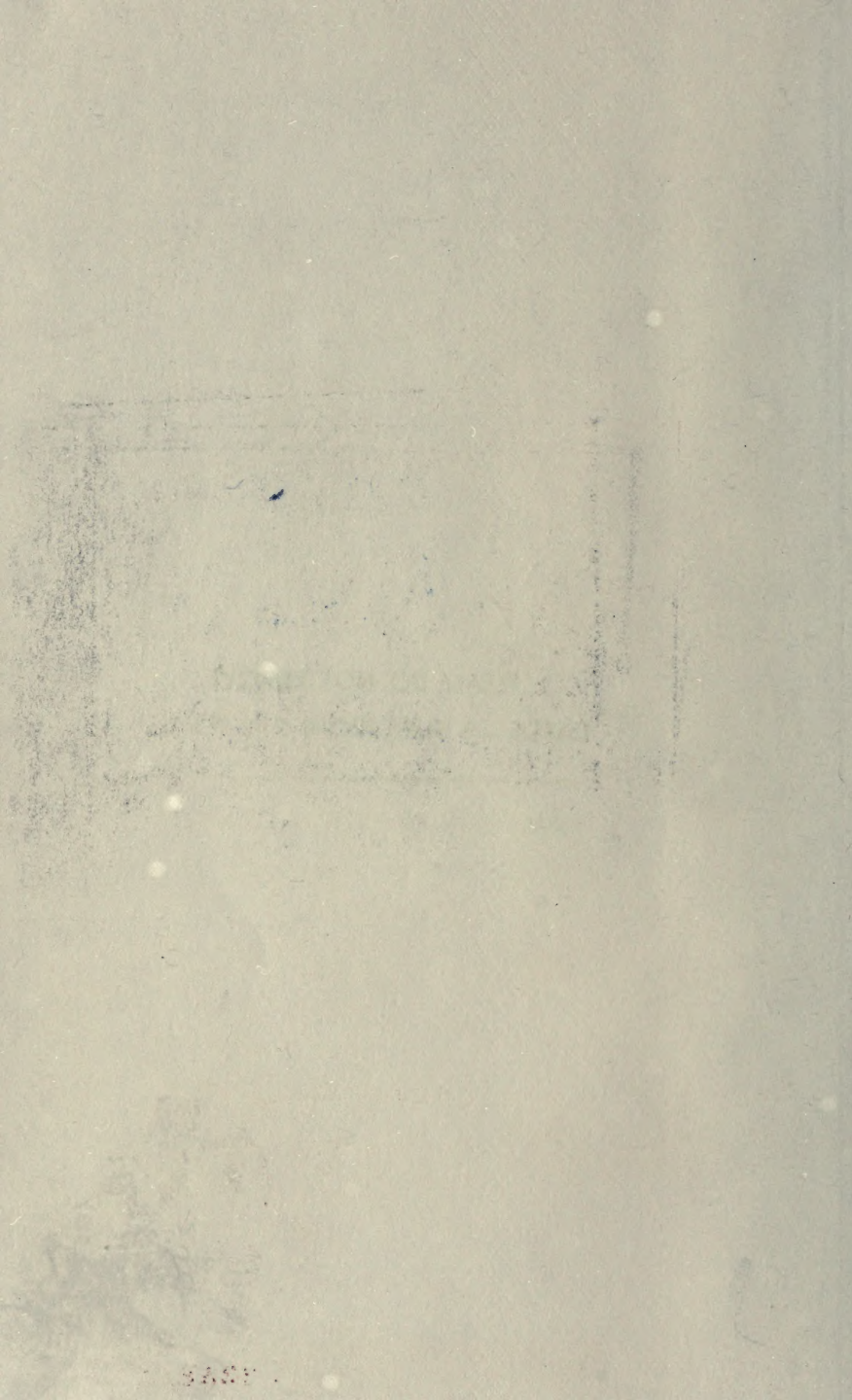
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